City departments join together
for one grand Open House May 15

If you love the annual Police Open House held each spring, and anxiously await the Fire Open House held each fall, you will love the all-city Open House on Sunday, May 15, 2005, that will combine the best of all City departments into one grand event.

In years past, the police and fire departments each hosted separate open houses. This year, we decided to combine them and invite other departments in the City to join in. The combined Open House will save taxpayer dollars and will give residents a chance to learn more about the many other services the City provides.

The event will include all your favorite activities from previous open houses and more, including:

- The opportunity for kids to climb on fire engines, DPW trucks, and police motorcycles;
- Tours of City Hall, the Police building, Fire station, and 47th District Court;
- The dedication of a 9/11 memorial in front of City Hall;
- SWAT, K-9 and fire safety demonstrations;
- Moonwalks, games and prizes, including a personalized street sign;
- Information on everything from recreation, recycling and rain gardens to voter registration, water quality, and programs for youths, seniors and all ages in between.

So, mark your calendars for Sunday, May 15, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come early and enjoy “Breakfast with a Firefighter” at 9:30 a.m. Donations will be accepted for the breakfast, which will benefit Farmington Hills youth programs. For more information, call (248) 871-2500.

New fire station to include community center

This spring, construction will begin on a new fire station to replace the old one on Grand River one block east of Middlebelt. Built in 1948, the old station — one of five stations serving Farmington Hills — is no longer adequate to handle the increased demand for medical and fire services in the southeast section of the City.

The new two-story fire station will be approximately 16,500 square feet. In addition to more space for firefighters and their equipment, the station will have 3,000 square feet designated for community activities, including after-school youth programs, senior adult programs, recreation, cultural arts programs, and more. It will also provide a meeting place for residents and homeowners’ associations in the area.

“The new fire station addresses several needs in our community,” said Mayor Vicki Barnett. “First, it provides an up-to-date public safety facility for this section of the City. It also provides a wonderful community center that will be within walking or bicycling distance for many residents. Finally, it’s an opportunity for positive redevelopment along Grand River.”

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Exchange Club is donating over $25,000 to fund youth and family programs at the new community center.

Spring yard waste pickup resumes
Monday, April 4th

Yard waste pickup will resume on Monday, April 4th and continue through the last Friday of November. Leaves, grass, shrub clippings, twigs and plant materials will all be accepted for composting.

The following three options are available for yard waste disposal:

1. Place yard waste in a trash can with a “Yard Waste” sticker (available free from City Hall or the DPW). Please follow the City’s 32-gallon limit on trash can size or your garbage will not be picked up.

2. Put yard waste in brown paper yard waste bags. You can buy a pack of ten for $4 from City Hall or the DPW (checks only please at the DPW).

3. Recycle by using a mulching mower that leaves grass clippings on the lawn; use grass and leaves as a natural mulch to fertilize plants; or create your own backyard compost pile. For guidelines on home composting, call the DPW at (248) 871-2850.

Please note: Small limbs (six inches in diameter or less) and brush should be tied in bundles that don’t exceed four feet in length and don’t weigh more than 60 pounds per bundle. Any brush or twigs placed in cans or bags shouldn’t stick out above the top of the container. Also, large quantities of dirt or sod are not accepted for pickup.

CITY HILLS
City of Farmington Hills

New Community Newsletter
Spring 2005

Our Community Newsletter
Spring 2005

City of Farmington Hills
Focus

Senior activities  

As winter’s chill begins to seep out of our bones, springtime activities return to the Farmington Hills Center for Active Adults at the Costick Activities Center. Adults 50 & better are invited to stop by and join us for a trip, program or activity.

- IRT-seniors members of the Farmington Hills Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) will assist with tax return preparation Tuesdays through April 12 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. There is no fee.
- Explore the Nature Center with City Naturalist Joe Derek and tour the Visitor Center in beautiful Heritage Park on March 9 at 11 a.m. Relax with a box lunch and chat with Brian Golden of the Farmington Historical Society. Cost is $3 per person.
- Celebrate the Wearin’ o the Green at our St. Paddy’s Day Party on March 11 from 11 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Dancing, games, entertainment, prizes and an Irish lunch. $6 per person. Tickets are available through March 7.
- Find out what shades and tones work best for you and how to incorporate them into your wardrobe and cosmetic choices with a Merle Norman Consultant. Choose Your Colors is planned for March 22 at 10:30 a.m. Cost is $3.
- Weed through all the gardening options at Michigan Native Gardening on April 5 at 10 a.m. A MSU botanist helps you choose the best plantings for local climate and soil conditions. Cost is $3.
- Learn more about relevant legal issues such as consumer law, estate planning, real estate law and inheritance care for seniors on April 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for Law Day. A continental breakfast and lunch are included. No cost.
- The Farmington Area Commission on Aging, in cooperation with Botsford General Hospital and the Senior Division, host the annual health fair, Project Healthy Living, on April 8 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. A variety of no-cost and low-cost tests will be available.
- Join Farmington Hills Police Dept. Sgt. Sandy Rochford who will discuss identity theft and scams such as the “10” tall (1-2) caliper trees to be planted on April 12 at 10:30 a.m.
- Join AARP for a comprehensive refresher driving course, 55 Alive/Mature Driving, on May 4 & 5. You must attend both classes and you may be able to get a reduction in your auto insurance. Cost is $12 for the two-day session.
- Be prepared and learn The Facts about Alzheimer’s Disease: Legal and Financial Considerations on May 19 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. presented by the Alzheimer’s Association.
- Join the Farmington Area Beautification Committee, local 5th graders, and the Senior Division for the annual Courtyard Planting on May 26 at 11 a.m.
- Registration is under way for the popular 50 and better men’s, women’s and mixed golf leagues scheduled at the new Farmington Hills Golf Club. The league is open to Farmington Hills and Farmington residents.
- Become part of the “Be Healthy, Get Fit” senior initiative by joining our Walking Group, which meets Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. rain or shine.
- To register for a program or to get more information, please call (248) 473-1830. The Senior Division is located in the Costick Activities Center, 28600 Eleven Mile Road, one-quarter mile east of Middletown Road. Enter through Gate 4.

Farmington Hills takes the L.E.A.D. in helping parents

The Farmington Hills Police Department has implemented the Law Enforcement Against Drugs (L.E.A.D.) program which provides in-home tests that parents can use to test their children for drug or alcohol use.

Developed by Total Diagnostic Systems of Livonia, the kits are available free of charge at the Police Records section at 31685 W. Eleven Mile just west of Orchard Lake Road during normal business hours. Several test kits are available: a single-panel kit for individual substances such as alcohol, marijuana, ecstasy, or cocaine; a multi-panel kit is also available that will test for the presence of four substances simultaneously. Each kit includes instructions on how to administer and evaluate the test. Parents are also provided with a list of local resources that can help parents address substance abuse concerns.

For more information about the L.E.A.D. program, call (248) 871-2720.

COMMUNITY NEWS & NOTES

Opportunities abound!

During the spring and summer, the City of Farmington Hills hires employed a wide variety of positions from part-time (20 hours) to temporary full-time (40 hours) in landscaping, road work, park maintenance and recreation programs. Hourly rates of pay range from $6 to $9+ and are based on qualifications and job responsibilities. Seasonal jobs often provide excellent training for future career opportunities. Open positions are advertised on the City website www.ci.farmington-hills.mi.us and in the local classifieds or you can contact the Human Resources Department at (248) 871-2490 for an application and information about available openings.

Get ready to tee-off

This spring, golfers will be able to enjoy a full 18 championship holes at the new Farmington Hills Golf Club on 11 Mile Court, two blocks west of 11 Mile and Halsted. The renovation of the old San Marino Golf Club will be complete and the new club will feature a first-rate driving range, pro shop, and club repair. The Golf Club also includes an excellent restaurant that not only serves lunch and dinner, but also is available for a banquet, party, or wedding reception. For information, call (248) 476-5910.

Summer day camps

It’s not too early to register for summer camp! The City of Farmington Hills has a summer of fun planned for children ages 3 to 12. Weekly camps are planned at the Costick Activities Center, Founders Sports Park and Heritage Park. Activities include crafts, games, nature study, sports and field trips. Camps will begin the week of June 13 and run through August 15. Extended care is also available before and after the camp program. You can find more information about summer camps in our program brochure; you can also visit the City’s website or contact the Recreation office at (248) 473-1800.

Costick Center birthday party packages

Looking for something fun and different for your child’s birthday party? The Costick Activities Center offers plenty of options including a pool party. Packages include cake, ice cream, and goodie bags, and all activities are led by trained staff members. For details, call (248) 473-1814 or stop by the Costick Activities Center on 11 Mile between Middletown and Inkster.

River Day is June 4

Mark your calendar and join the festivities for the annual River Day at Heritage Park. A river cleanup, invasive plant removal, and lots of fun are planned. More details will be available as the date gets closer. Watch your local newspaper or visit our website.

No garbage pickup on Memorial Day

Garbage collection will not be scheduled for the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 30. Since Memorial Day falls on a Monday, all garbage and recycling pickups will be delayed by one day during that week. Monday’s route will be picked up on Tuesday; Tuesday’s route will be picked up on Wednesday; and so on with Friday’s collection made on Saturday. To make sure that your garbage is picked up throughout the year, please put it at the curbside by 7 a.m.

Trash can size limits

The City of Farmington Hills limits trash can size to 32 gallons. If you put an oversized container out at the curbside it will not be emptied. If you’ve already bought a container that’s larger than 32 gallons, try to return it to the place of purchase for a refund. But if it’s used and can’t be returned, it’ll make a great storage container for sports equipment or gardening supplies.

Earth Day celebration

Join us on Saturday, April 16th, at Heritage Park for a celebration of our planet. The event will include a special Bat Zone presentation. For more information call the Nature Center at (248) 477-1135.

Don’t fertilize before May

If you fertilized your lawn in the fall, you will have a green lawn in early spring and won’t need to fertilize before May. If you didn’t fertilize in the fall, remember: Don’t spread fertilizer if the ground is frozen. If you have a lawn service, ask your provider to adhere to these guidelines - it helps keep our rivers and streams clean!

Cities join with local nursery to help replace ash trees

The cities of Farmington Hills and Farmington have teamed up with Steinkopf Nursery, located at 20815 Farmington Road just north of Eight Mile, to offer deciduous trees to local residents at a reduced price.

“With the Emerald Ash Borer causing the demise of so many ash trees, the need to plant new trees in our community has never been greater,” said City Manager Steve Brock. “I have planted a Cleveland Select Pear and a Sugar Maple and it has added to the diversity of the community landscape.”

Residents who call Steinkopf Nursery and mention this article will be able to purchase new 10’ to 12’ tall (1-2) caliper trees from among ten different varieties for $178 each. The price includes sales tax, delivery, planting, and a one-year guarantee. The program was very popular last year, so don’t delay. For questions about the program, call the City of Farmington Hills Planning Office at (248) 871-2540, or Steinkopf Nursery at (248) 474-2925.
Cultural arts events & activities rev into high gear this spring

Blackthorn performs two nights
The rollicking Irish music of Blackthorn will fill the Farmington Players Barn on Thursday, March 3 and Friday, March 4, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Blackthorn has remained a perennial favorite in our area, with sold out concerts two years in a row! Get your tickets early and enjoy a wonderful evening in “Ireland.” Tickets are $15 adults, $12 seniors/students, and are on sale at the Costick Center, or can be charged by phone by calling (248) 473-1857. Our generous sponsor for this concert is Saturn of Farmington Hills.

Trip to Oz Interactive movie event March 10 at Phoenix Theatre
Calling all wizards, witches, munchkins and little girls from Kansas! Dust off your ruby slippers and join us for a trip down the yellow brick road. Dressing up is optional, but don’t miss this chance to become your favorite character (or piece of the scenery!) and play along at this special interactive showing of the movie classic, “The Wizard of Oz.” Context, activities and a special Q & A with one of the movie’s original cast members will begin one-half hour before show time. Advance tickets are available at the Costick Center and at the Phoenix Theatre in Farmington Hills or charge by phone at (248) 473-1857. Two shows: 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. Tickets: $8 children/seniors; $10 adults (18-54). Tickets will also be available at the theater approximately one hour before show time.

Art Jam with the Candy Band March 19 at Erhard BMW
Little ones can jam to the rhythm of the Candy Band at a free concert for kids ages 3-8 and their families. Besides the kid-oriented rock concert by mommies and daddies “The Candy Band,” there will be hands-on art activities and light refreshments. The fun begins at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 19 at Erhard BMW, 38700 Grand River Ave., Farmington Hills. Call (248) 473-1857 for more information.

Kids & Strings concert at Farmington Players Barn
Back by popular demand, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra’s Ambassador String Quintet will introduce children to the exciting world of live music on Saturday, April 23 at 11 a.m. This is a fun, interactive concert for children ages 3-7 and their families.

Festival of the Arts returns April 27 – May 1
Named the “2004 Event of the Year” by the Festival of the Arts returns April 27 – May 1 and will bring back the popular “Art into High Gear” of the last year. The Festival of the Arts is presented by the Farmington Community Arts Council and the City of Farmington Hills.

Farmington Community Chorus spring concert, May 13 and 14
The 25th annual spring concert by the Farmington Community Chorus is entitled “The Best is Yet to Come” and will be held at Detroit Country Day School’s Seligman Performing Arts Center in Beverly Hills on Friday and Saturday, May 13 and 14, beginning at 8 p.m. Directed by Steve SeGraves and accompanied by Susan Gir, the Chorus entertains audiences with ensemble and solo singing, dancing, and talented instrumentalists. Tickets will be available beginning in early April from Chorus members, at the Costick Center or through the FCC ticket line at (800) 632-4067.

Art exhibits at City Gallery, Art in the Corridor at City Halls
The City Gallery, located in the Costick Activities Center lobby (open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays and during special events) will feature Kristina Gregory-Hsu’s surreal portraits of nature March 7-April 15 and the Michigan Weavers Guild April 22-June 2. The City Gallery, located in the Costick Activities Center lobby (open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays and during special events) will feature Kristina Gregory-Hsu’s surreal portraits of nature March 7-April 15 and the Michigan Weavers Guild April 22-June 2. Another important exhibit is “The Wonderful World of Oz” April 15-17 & 22-23. Young actors in Grades 1-12 and several of their parents are featured in “The Wonderful World of Oz” - a musical by Sky’s the Limit Productions, presented by the City of Farmington Hills Youth Theatre. This wonderful production features music from the original movie classic as well as from the Broadway play, “The Wiz.” Performances are Friday, April 15 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, April 16 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, April 17 at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.; Friday, April 22 at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, April 23 at noon and 3 p.m. All performances are at the Costick Center. Tickets are $8 and will be available beginning March 20 by calling (734) 634-4678.

Classes and camps
dozens of fun cultural arts classes for kids and adults will be offered this spring. Kids can also sign up for summer art camps, including Youth Theatre camps. Watch your mailbox for registration information or call (248) 473-1857.

2005 Household HazMat Days schedule
On Saturday, May 7, the City of Farmington Hills will hold its annual HouseHoud Hazardous Materials Drop-off Day from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Costick Center. Residents of Farmington, Farmington Hills, Novi, South Lyon, Lyon Township, Southfield, Walled Lake, and Wixom are all welcome to participate, but must have a refundable $8 fee as proof of residency. Please enter through Gate 4 of the Costick Center and stay in your car while technicians unload the hazardous materials. All containers should be properly labeled and not hold more than five gallons or weigh more than 50 pounds. Containers should also be placed in a box with a sturdy bottom and put on the floor or in the trunk.

For more information about HazMat Day or for a list of accepted and unaccepted materials, please call the DPW at 248-871-2850 or visit our website at www.ci.farmington-hills.mi.us.

Do a fire safety check-up this spring
Be sure to include fire safety in your spring chores this year. When you take out your clocks ahead (in April), be sure to change your smoke alarm batteries and then test your units by depressing the test button on the detector. If your home has smoke detectors that receive power from your home’s electrical system, you should also change the batteries in these units. Make sure these units are in working order.

Another important chore is to inspect your clothes dryer. The leading cause of home clothes dryer fires is lack of maintenance. Remember only to operate the dryer with a lint filter and always clear the accumulated lint from the filter and other areas on the dryer. Take time to inspect the dryer vent hose. Plastic dryer vent hoses should not be used; a rigid metal duct is the preferred connection from your dryer to the exterior of your home. Keep combustible materials away from the dryer.

Finally, never leave candles or other open flame devices unattended or near anything combustible. One-third of all home candle fires occurred after candles were left unattended, abandoned, or inadequately controlled. One-quarter occurred when some form of combustible material was left or came too close to the candle. Six percent were started by people (usually children) playing with the candle. If you are using candles, make sure that they are not left unattended and never leave a candle lit when you are not home.

Keep recyclable items out of the trash
Farmington Hills residents recycle at a higher-than-average rate for Michigan. However, sometimes residents do put recyclable items in the trash.

State law bans recyclable beverage containers, tires, and yard waste from Michigan landfills. Our waste hauling contractor can receive steep fines for violating this law. You can help them avoid fines and help the environment at the same time by making sure you recycle these items:

Beverage containers. Return all MI 10-cent deposit containers for a refund and place all plastic (PET and #1) beverage containers in your recycling bin.

Yard waste. Do not place any yard waste at the curbside after the local yard waste collection program ends (yard waste is picked up in Farmington Hills from the first Monday in April until the last Friday in November).
Effective January 1, 2005, a new “Consolidated Elections” law went into effect designed to streamline elections in Michigan. Here is a summary of the changes and how they will affect Farmington Hills voters:

1. Voters will now vote at the same polling place for all elections. All Farmington Hills voters, no matter what school district they live in, will vote at the same polling place for every election.

2. All federal, state, county, city, township, village and school elections are restricted to four dates per year: the fourth Tuesday in February and the first Tuesday in May, August, and November. Our local school districts, including Farmington, Walled Lake, and Clarenceville, as well as Oakland Community College and Schoolcraft Community College, have opted to have their candidates and ballot questions on the May ballot. The City’s Mayor/City Council candidates will continue to be elected in November of odd years.

3. All school district elections will be administered by the county, city, or township clerk; school personnel will no longer have a role in administering school elections. As a result, all elections in Farmington Hills, including school, will be administered by the Farmington Hills City Clerk. Candidate nominating petition packets, requests for absentee ballots, and questions about school elections should now be directed to the City Clerk’s Office at (248) 871-2410.

New voter ID cards will be mailed to all Farmington Hills registered voters shortly. When you receive it, please throw your old voter ID away.

Changes to Precincts 26 & 27

Boundaries are being changed for Precincts 26 and 27 (see map). If you are in the Farmington Public School district, you will vote in Precinct 26. If you are in the Clarenceville School District, you will vote in Precinct 27. Your new voter ID card will reflect this change.

If you have any questions about how these changes affect you, please call the Farmington Hills City Clerk’s Office at (248) 871-2410 or visit our website at www.ci.farmington-hills.mi.us.

Court expands payment options

This year, the 47th District Court will begin offering a service through Government Payment Services (GPS) that offers people the option of paying traffic fines over the phone. GPS is a user-friendly service allowing payments on court cases by credit card 24 hours a day, seven days a week via a toll-free number. A five percent service fee is paid by the cardholder who uses the service. This payment option will be offered in addition to the in-person credit card payment option which is available Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This new service will offer convenience to those paying fines and will reduce court expenses associated with the collection of overdue payments.