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Focus
City of Farmington Hills

CITY-WIDE OPEN HOUSE - SUNDAY, MAY 18 - NOON TO 4:00 PM

Come join the fun at the Free Fourth Annual City-Wide Open House on the City Hall campus at the corner of Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake Roads.

Want to learn more about important news in Farmington Hills?

Go to www.fhgov.com and click on the items in the Hills Highlights section on the website’s main page. Current in-depth news includes:

- Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- The Master Plan for Future Land Use - Draft
- The Collaboration Study - Final Report
- Understanding Proposal A in a Declining Market – Informational Brochure

Fire Department

Outdoor Burning Policy

The City of Farmington Hills does not issue permits, or approve of the burning of yard waste (leaves, branches, grass, etc.) within the City limits. Violators will be asked to extinguish the fire upon the Fire Department’s arrival and/or will be issued a court summons for the infraction. Social groups such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts may apply for a special permit for an event and applications may be obtained at Fire Headquarters. On days with temperatures below 32 degrees, construction crews may be allowed to burn in a barrel to thaw construction materials such as sand for mass forming work or constructive adhesives. Seasoned wood may be burned under supervision in commercially manufactured outdoor fireplaces or chimineas that have screened sides and a lid.

Address Requirement

The City’s property identification ordinance applies to all commercial and residential properties to insure that all properties have numbers permanently mounted and easily visible from the street. For residential properties, numbers (not script or cursive) need to be a minimum of 5 inches in height, a color that contrasts with the color of the background, and mounted so they are easily visible at all times (not behind trees, posts or other obstructions.) Addresses on mailboxes, rocks, or painted on the street do not take the place of numbers on the residence, but may be helpful if the residence is not visible from the street.

On commercial properties, numbers must be a minimum of 6 inches in height, and in many cases need to be even larger because of setbacks from the road. The same requirements for color and contrasting background apply, and numbers should be mounted as high as possible so they are visible over the tops of vehicles. Remember, if responding emergency crews (Fire, Police, and Ambulance) can’t locate an address, they’ll be delayed in providing needed assistance.

Barbeque Restrictions

If you live in an apartment, condo or townhouse, what you do in your unit affects the safety and well being of all those in your building. The City has an ordinance that prohibits the use or storage of fuel-fired barbeques on balconies or patios. The following information should be contained in all lease agreements. Barbecues may not be used any closer than 8 feet from any building, unit, balcony or patio. If found in violation, the tenant or property owner(s) can receive a court summons or receive a cost recovery statement for all emergency units that responded. Barbecues may not be used any closer than 8 feet from any building, unit, balcony or patio. If found in violation, the tenant or property owner(s) can receive a court summons or receive a cost recovery statement for all emergency units that responded. Barbecues may not be used any closer than 8 feet from any building, unit, balcony or patio. If found in violation, the tenant or property owner(s) can receive a court summons or receive a cost recovery statement for all emergency units that responded. Barbecues may not be used any closer than 8 feet from any building, unit, balcony or patio. If found in violation, the tenant or property owner(s) can receive a court summons or receive a cost recovery statement for all emergency units that responded.

Any questions or concerns? Contact the Fire Department at 248-871-2800.

Police Department

This spring, make it a point to add a home security tune-up to your “to do” list. Follow these tips to minimize your risk of theft during the upcoming warm weather months:

GARAGE

- If you aren’t in the garage, keep it closed and locked.
- If you do occasionally leave the garage door open, remove valuables and store them in the house. Lagging your golf clubs from the basement to the car is easier than replacing them!
- Keep your vehicle locked, even when it’s parked in the garage and don’t leave personal items inside.
- Lock bicycles that are stored in the garage.
- Secure power tools. When this isn’t possible, engrave them with your driver’s license number. (Engravers are available, on loan, from the Police Department’s Crime Prevention Section.)
- Check your garage pedestrian door lock, if you don’t have a deadbolt on this door, consider installing one.

EXTERIOR

- Inspect all your door locks and by the way, use them!
- Ensure that all exterior lights work. Check motion activated security lights that may not go on during the day.
- If you store a ladder outside, make sure it’s secured.

LANDSCAPE

- Make sure trees and shrubs planted close to your home are trimmed on the bottom and cut well below windows. This will allow you to see out and prevent would-be thieves from hiding behind them.
- If you plant new shrubs under or around windows, those with thorns provide added security.
- Trim plants that may prevent your exterior lighting from being activated.

Consider having a FREE home security survey conducted. You’ll get a written assessment along with recommendations for improvement. Call the Crime Prevention Section at 248-871-2750, Monday –Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Police Department’s “Cops for Kids” Run - June 7

The Farmington Hills Police Department will host its 19th Annual Run/Walk for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) on Saturday, June 7 at the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

Registration starts at 8 a.m., with juice and bagels available, and the run begins at 9 a.m. The event includes a 10K race, a non-competitive 5K run, and a free one-mile fun run for kids. The $20 entry fee includes a t-shirt, food, drinks, and a donation to MDA.

Over the past 18 years, the Farmington Hills Police Department has raised more than $96,000 to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Proceeds will be forwarded to the MDA at their Annual Labor Day Telethon. For more information or to pre-register, call 248-871-2620 or e-mail mrichardson@fhgov.com.
Spring/Summer 2008 Road Construction

The City of Farmington Hills will be reconstructing or improving the sections of roads listed below. No closures and no detours will be necessary due to the construction.

- Fourteen Mile Road between Drake and Farmington - Asphalt resurfacing and repair of the existing roadway including the addition of a center left turn lane. Work is expected to begin in early June with completion before Labor Day.
- Farmington Road between Thirteen Mile and Fourteen Mile - Asphalt resurfacing and repair of the existing roadway. Work is expected to begin in early June with completion before Labor Day.
- Fourteen Mile Road between Farmington and Orchard Lake Roads - Asphalt resurfacing and repair of the existing roadway including the addition of a center left turn lane. The existing traffic signal at Gate House Lane will also be modernized. Work is expected to begin in early June with completion before Labor Day.
- Fourteen Mile/Farmington Intersection - The Road Commission for Oakland County will convert this intersection to a roundabout. This work is expected to begin in late July or early August with completion in Spring 2009.

GOING GREEN - THINKING GLOBALLY, ACTING LOCALLY

The City is currently participating in the Rebuild Michigan Program, in an effort to increase building efficiency and save on energy costs. As a part of this program, ten of the City’s public facilities were toured and had their utility bills analyzed. The results of this Introductory Energy Evaluation (IEE) are expected later this spring.

Mayor Jerry Ellis has also established the Green Efforts Committee that will:
- Examine recommendations in the IEE and consider costs vs. benefits of specific projects
- Inventory the City’s renewable energy resources
- Explore ways to implement sustainable building practices
- Consider community-wide promotion of environmental sustainability and energy efficiency

The Green Efforts Committee will present a report of its findings within twelve months to the City Council. In the meantime, check out what you can do to increase the energy efficiency of your home at www.energystar.gov.

The Alliance of Rouge Communities, Working Together, Restoring the River

The Alliance of Rouge Communities is revamping their Watershed Plan® and wants public input. You’re invited to a meeting to learn about Rouge River water quality on June 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Costick Center. For more information on the Alliance, please visit www.alliancedeetroit.org.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

In December 2007, two distinctly separate historic districts were side by side for a brief moment in time! The Coach House Barn, which had called the Botsford Inn (Historic District #11) home for more than 85 years, was physically moved to the Eber Durham House (Historic District #1) on Thirteen Mile Road to make room for a new cancer center at Botsford Hospital. During this journey the Coach House Barn passed by the West Farmington Cemetery (Historic District #910) located on Halsted Road, south of Twelve Mile Road. The Historic District Commission would like to thank Jeff and Sherrie Stewart, owners of the Eber Durham House, for their dedication to historic preservation, extensive restoration efforts, careful planning, and vision.

Don’t Lose Your Home to Foreclosure - Help is Available!

It’s no secret that a number of Michiganders are facing economic challenges. More and more families are finding it increasingly difficult to make their mortgage payments, resulting in possible foreclosure. The following organizations are available to assist homeowners:

- Oakland County Housing Counseling
  Housing Counseling and foreclosure-related links
  www.oakgov.com/chshousing

- Michigan State Housing Development Authority
  “Save the Dream” - Helps connect homeowners with Home Ownership Counselors
  www.michigan.gov/mshda

- MSHDA Home Ownership Counselor Directory
  www.mshda.info/counseling
  866-946-7452

- National Foundation for Credit Counseling
  Homeowner Housing and Credit Counseling
  www.nfcc.org
  800-588-2227

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
  For further information on foreclosures and to locate a Home Ownership Counselor
  www.hud.gov/foreclosure

- HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agencies
  www.hud.gov/offices
  888-995-HOPE

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
  “How to Avoid Foreclosure” Publication
  www.hudclips.org

- Federal Housing Administration
  FHASecure - Provides certain sub-prime borrowers refinancing opportunities
  1-800-CALL-FHA

Housing discrimination is prohibited by law. If you have a housing discrimination complaint, contact the Michigan Department of Civil Rights at 313-436-3700.
to all persons who are eligible and have requested to be placed on the permanent absentee ballot application list.

For the August and November Elections, absentee voter ballot applications will automatically be mailed to all persons who have requested to be placed on the permanent list by mid-June 2008. This will be a DUAL APPLICATION that will provide you the opportunity to request a ballot for both the August Primary and November Presidential Elections. Applications can also be downloaded from www.fhgov.com after June 20, 2008.

ELECTION WORKERS NEEDED!
With a big Election Year ahead of us, there is looking for people to work as Election Inspectors for the upcoming Primary and Presidential Elections. Students who are at least 16 years of age are eligible. Teachers – here’s a great opportunity to get your students involved in the Election process. With school not in session on these days, students can serve the community and also make a little extra cash.

Healthy LAWN CARE
To learn about healthy lawn care and earth-friendly fertilizers or to see a list of endorsed lawn care companies offering the healthy lawn program for watershed protection, visit: www.socwa.org or www.healthylandscapes.com

Yard Waste Pickup
To dispose of leaves, grass, shrub clippings, twigs, and plant materials, follow these options:

- Place yard waste in a 32 gallon trash can with yard waste stickers available free from City Hall or the DPW. Oversized containers put out at the curbside will not be emptied.
- Put yard waste in brown paper yard waste bags.
- Use a mulching mower and recycle grass clippings into the lawn.
- Small limits (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 should not stick out above the top of the container. Also, large quantities of dirt or sod are not accepted for pickup.

Remember, don’t dump yard waste by a river or stream. The decomposing leaves and grass add excess nutrients to the waterway, which can kill fish.

WEST NILE VIRUS UPDATE
It’s West Nile Virus season once again, so protect yourself by following the Three Rs:

- REDUCE areas where mosquitoes breed. Eliminate standing water collected in tires, buckets, strollers, unused pools, clogged roof gutters, bird baths, and other containers.
- REPEL against mosquitoes. Use insect repellants (follow manufacturers guidelines and do not use on children younger than 2 years old.) Wear protective clothing such as long sleeves and pants.
- REPORT the location of a dead bird. Call the Oakland County Health Division at 877-577-5641.

City workers have treated all City-owned storm water catch basins with a slow-release larvicide known to kill mosquitoes. All property owners are also urged to eliminate standing water on their property. Creeks and retention areas that are healthy and running are not considered a prime area for mosquito breeding and therefore do not need to be treated. However, if water is stagnant, such as in a private storm sewer catch basin located in a driveway, backyard, or open space, it should be treated with a drop-in larvicide tablet available from local retailers. For more info, go to www.oakgov.com/health or www.michigan.gov/westnilevirus.
CITY DIRECTORY

Emergency Calls Only
- 9-1-1
Police
- 9-1-1
Fire
Central Services/Purchasing
248-871-2420
City Clerk
248-871-2410
City Hall
248-871-2400
City Manager’s Office
248-871-2500
Council Newsletter
248-871-2511
District Court
248-871-2900
Farmington Community Library
248-553-0300
Finance Department
248-871-2440
Assessing
248-871-2470
Treasury
248-871-2460
Fire Department
Non-emergency
248-871-2900
General Information
248-871-2400
Human Resources
248-871-2490
Planning Department
Building
248-871-2450
Community Development and Housing Rehabilitation
248-871-2549
Planning
248-871-2540
Zoning
248-871-2520
Police Department
Non-emergency
248-871-2900
Public Services Department
248-871-2530
Public Works
248-871-2850
Cultural Arts Division
248-473-1856
Golf Club
248-476-5910
Ice Arena
248-478-8800
Jon Grant Center
248-871-2849
Luna Center
248-477-1135
Nature Center
248-473-1830
Parks & Golf
248-473-1860
Recreational Parks
248-471-8820
Senior Adult Program
248-473-1830
Senior Adult Services
248-473-1841
Volunteer Center
248-475-1813

Focus is produced by the City of Farmington Hills and mailed to residents three times a year. Articles are submitted by City department directors. We welcome your comments.

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For the latest info on Farmington Hills, visit www.fhgov.com or tune into Cable Channel 8.

SPRING/SUMMER 2008

Special Services Department

SENIOR DIVISION

The Center for Active Adult offers a variety of programs, classes, and special events at the Costick Center. Call 248-473-1830 for more information on registration, times, and fees.

EVENING VITAL WOMEN SERIES

Downsizing - June 9
Balcony Gardening - June 23

LIFELONG LEARNING AT LONGACRE

Farmington Hills History and the New Historical Museum - May 28
Farmington: Up Close - June 4
Farmington Hills Biz - June 25

EVENING PROGRAMS

Fernando’s Ballroom - Mondays 6-7 p.m.
Ballroom with a Latin flair. Rumba/Merengue. Frost out to Ballroom - Tuesdays 7-8 p.m.
Intermediate level. Mambo. East Coast Swing
Let’s Dance - Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m.
Beginner level. Mambo. East Coast Swing
Social Dancing - Variety of dances, two 7-week sessions.
Yoga – Tuesday and Thursdays, 7-week sessions at Longacre House
Women’s Softball Season - Starts May 20
Alzheimer’s Workshop: Legal & Financial Issues - June 4

MOTHER’S DAY TEA
Celebrate mothers, grandmothers, and daughters with a lovely tea on May 9, 2-4 p.m. Enjoy a fashion show, custom makeover, sweets, and tea as well as cosmetic tips, prizes, and gifts. Tickets $10, register by May 5.

SUMMER FUN
The Recreation Division offers many affordable activities for summertime. For more info, refer to the Summer Activities Brochure mailed to your home, call 248-471-1800 or visit the Department of Special Services at www.fhgov.com and click on the program schedule.

FARMINGTON HILLS FAMILY FUN WALK
Fifth annual family Fun Walk, May 17, 10 a.m.-noon, Heritage Park. Proceeds to Meals on Wheels and Senior Transportation Services. Refreshments, kids’ activities, door prizes. Pre-registration $10, same day registration $15. Call 248-473-1830.

PIES ON THE GRAND
Fifth annual blueberry pie extravaganza. Volunteers needed for baking, panning, and selling. Pies baked at the Costick Center July 16 - 18 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Enjoy blueberry pie and blueberry cookies at Art on the Grand during the Farmington Area Founders Festival, July 18 – 20. All proceeds support Senior Division Transportation. For more information, call 248-473-1850.

TOTAL WELLFAIRNESS FOR ADULTS 50 & BETTER
Watch for a new free wellness fair presented by the Senior Division on Wednesday, September 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Costick Center. This fair features exciting and informative healthy life interactive demonstrations and exhibits. Exercise, holistic healing, relaxation, financial planning, prizes, healthy cooking demos, health screenings, chair massages, tips on “going green,” and more.

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