

Telegraph



County Employees Celebrate the Holiday and ESP Awards

What a bright time, it was the right time to rock the day away at the county's annual Holiday Party at White Lake Oaks on Wednesday December 9, 2009.

County employees had a swell time in jingle bell time with DeeJay Joe Spiteri who returned for another year. Ultimate Events Productions was blowing up bushels of fun, bringing in audience participation for some good laughs. And people mixed and a-mingled with jingling feet at the buffet table with prime rib, chicken and pasta.

But the people who went a jingling home with some extra holiday change were the county employees honored for their contributions to the Employee Suggestion Program (ESP). County Executive L. Brooks Patterson kicked off the program thanking county employees for their hard work through the year.



Musical chairs brings out the competitive spirit!

Then Clare Cheesman presented the ESP awards.

Gloria Logan in IT dialed in the grand prize of \$1,000 for her suggestion to purchase a bucket of minutes instead of having individual calling plans for each county wireless device. She saved the county more than \$19,000 per year.

The \$750 second prize went to Kristy Bills in Circuit Court. She licked the competition with her observation the county could save about \$15,000 a year in stamps by using mail slots for court appointed attorneys rather than mailing them paperwork.

Sheriff's Office Assistant Anna Mekoski suggested the department should collect nominal fees on police clearance requests. The holiday light above her head saved the county \$6,000 per year, which garnered her third place with a \$500 prize.



This year's ESP winners and L. Brooks Patterson.

The holiday light above her head saved the county \$6,000 per year, which garnered her third place with a \$500 prize.

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From Whence We Came

Over the years, births, deaths, divorces and court cases recorded by the Oakland County Clerk & Register of Deeds office have gone from handwritten records carefully inked in huge ledgers to computerized systems and now, even “paperless” court cases as part of the eFiling program.

Sidney Dole, the first county clerk, who also served as the county register of deeds, was appointed in 1820 – the year Oakland County was officially organized. In later years, the two offices remained separate until they were officially combined in 1958. To date, most counties do not have combined offices.

The office of clerk, with a history dating back to the Magna Carta, serves as the official “keeper of the record” responsible for the receipt, storage, retrieval and safeguarding of millions of court, birth, death, marriage, property records as well as for the compilation and canvassing of election results.

One family has a very distinguished record of service to the office. The Allens – father, mother and son – all served at one time as the clerk of Oakland County. Lynn D. Allen (Senior) was first elected in 1932. His wife Florence was appointed to fill his term after his death in 1958 and their son, Lynn D. Allen served as clerk for 30 years.

Ruth Johnson is the first woman ever elected to the office of clerk. The first woman elected as county Register of Deeds was Lucile Avery in 1922. The second woman elected to the post was Mabel Brondige in 1926. (See accompanying photo).



County employees celebrate the holiday and ESP awards Cont. from page 1

Five took home the \$100 prize. Take note, Diane Peters in the Sheriff’s Office saved the county more than \$4,400 each year with the idea to offer notary services for papers required for a gun permit. We don’t know how Julie Josselyn in 52-1 District Court scheduled her time to spend her prize money. But her inspiration to provide a schedule at sentencing for holiday testing rather than mailing out to 1,400 people each holiday saved about \$4,300. That’s about how much Sheriff’s Deputy Gregory Tait saved the county when he suggested reducing the number of Aramark meal sheet copies by half. Though, there were no caloric savings.



The buffet included a wonderful selection of salads as well as a beef carving station

Don’t be envious of Facilities Custodial Supervisor James “Tom” Cokely just because he had a suggestion that not only saved the county \$3,300 but also was green. Thanks to Tom, Oakland County now uses washable microfiber cleaning cloths instead of paper towels. Last but not least in the \$100 prize category is Kelly Jennings in the Clerk’s Office. Her idea for juris prudence has turned into fiscal prudence: Ordering only one copy of Prosecutor’s Office transcripts for cases with multiple defendants saved the county more than \$2,600 per year.

Collecting \$25 prizes were Kent Gardner and Sean Burney from the Sheriff’s Office and Craig Eaton from Friend of the Court. Also receiving mention for their ideas were Mike Zack from Planning and Economic Development, Christopher Coffey from Water Resources and Diane Jeffery from Human Resources.

In 2009, the county implemented 14 of 120 employee suggestions for a total savings of \$60,288. Since ESP’s inception in 1993, the county has implemented 260 of 2,411 suggestions for a total savings of \$5,562,365. Keep them coming!

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The Backpack Brigade

By Diana Carver

Headed up by Barb Baril, the Backpack Brigade was at it again this year starting in September. Last year they stuffed over 10 backpacks with school supplies for less fortunate children in Oakland County. This year they were out there again after those good bargains. Several generous people from the Pretrial Supervision Unit purchased school supplies and backpacks from the clearance rack for the Employee Toy Drive this winter. They filled the backpacks for the children in need this holiday season. If you would like to donate to the Backpack Brigade in 2010, please contact Barb Baril at barilb@oakgov.com.



Check Out New HR Training & Development Opportunities!

The new HR/Training & Development catalog for 2010 is now available for your review. The catalog details all employee development opportunities available to Oakland County employees.

In 2010, we have added four new courses to the catalog based on your feedback. We have added a grammar course, *Write On! Proper Business English*; a writing course, *Write On! Effective E-mails, Letters, and Reports*; a customer service course, *Customer Service Basics*; and a meetings course, *Leading Productive Meetings* (for those individuals in a supervisory or leadership role).

For more information, visit our website at <http://my.oakgov.com/Human Resources/Training> to view the catalog, which has detailed course listings, course descriptions, registration policies and procedures, and the schedule of classes. You may still request enrollment through HR Self-Service.

In 2009, subscription functionality was added to the HR Training & Development website. Employees can now stay informed by receiving training updates sent directly to their e-mail inbox. To subscribe, visit our website and sign up to receive updates.

Questions? Contact (248) 452-9945 or by e-mail at hrtraining@oakgov.com



GOOD EATS!

Ming's Chinese Food
2403 Elizabeth Lake Road
Waterford, MI 48328
(248) 681-1781
Open 7 Days

You have probably passed Ming's and not even noticed the tiny little restaurant comfortably snuggled in a little strip mall on Elizabeth Lake Road and happily preparing tasty Chinese food. Ming's is a no-frills Chinese food carry out restaurant that delivers value and speedy service. Ming's is popular with neighborhood locals. The food is good, the portions are generous and best of all, one can eat "on the cheap."

A sign in the window touts \$4.25 lunch specials, and a hand-lettered board just inside the door lists that week's selections. There are usually three or four lunch special choices, which can range from traditional to spicy to vegetarian. Patrons may also choose from 36 lunch and dinner combination plates, all of which include egg roll and chicken fried rice. The lunches range from \$4.95 - \$6.95. The dinners are priced from \$6.75 - \$8.50. Though most customers place "to go" orders, Ming's does offer a handful of tables for anyone wishing to dine in.

Ming's is owned and operated by Weiqiang Liang and his wife, Ming. The Liangs came to the United States from Hong Kong. Ming's opened in 2005.

Oakland County employees continue their generosity despite these challenging economic times.

On Dec. 15 County Executive L. Brooks Patterson presented a total of \$25,000 in checks to 15 charities on behalf of employees who donated to the Casual Day Fund. In addition, over the course of 2009 other worthy charities and deserving people received a total of \$10,000 from Special Casual Day donations.

But the kindness of Oakland County employees did not end there. Many came through to support Community Corrections' annual Food and Toy Drive which ran November 16 to December 10. Donations supported The Baldwin Center in Pontiac and Lighthouse of Oakland County. New this year Community Corrections also accepted donations for pets.

County staff donated a total of 29 bags of toys, 22 boxes of food and eight boxes of animal food and supplies. It culminated in a weekend of packing up and delivering the goods to those who need help most.





OakFit Wellness Program

Many events and activities are currently available for employees through OakFit! Below are results from our Health Screening Program. Also included are testimonials from your fellow employees who wanted to share how OakFit has changed their lives.

If you have not already done so, get involved! You'll find you can enjoy healthier living, improved morale and higher energy levels for work and play and hopefully lower-than-average out of pocket healthcare costs.

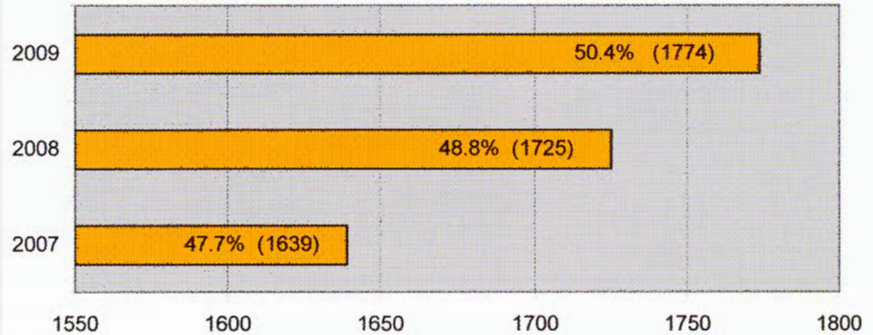
Exercise, proper nutrition, stress reduction and regular health screenings are the best offense for keeping your health in check. Our OakFit program, employee assistance program and benefit plans provide all the necessary tools to assist you in meeting your health and fitness needs. Education on your health, medical alternatives and building a relationship with your primary care physician can also benefit you when making decisions about your health.

Health Risk Assessments and Health Screenings

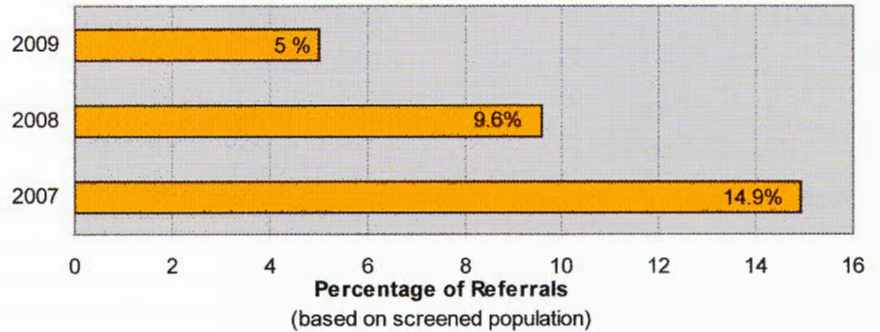
The aggregate data from 2007 through 2009 Oakland County Health Screenings and Health Risk Assessments was provided by Summit Health. No individual results were provided to Oakland County.

At the right are participation rates which increased approximately 8% from 2007 to 2009. In addition, 930 Oakland County employees have completed both the Health Risk Assessment and Health Screening all three years. (The percentages are based on the total number of employees who are eligible to participate.)

Number of Health Risk Assessment and Health Screening Participants
(participants completed both HRA and screening)



"At Risk" referrals from Health Screenings



"At Risk" Formal Referral

During the 2009 Health Screening Program, individuals who hit certain thresholds in one or more categories were considered "at risk." As a result, a Summit Health nurse referred "at risk" employees to their primary care physician for follow up treatment. The chart at the right shows the decline of "at risk" referrals given to employees during annual health risk screenings. This is a positive indication of preventative care. Employees are demonstrating they want to be healthier!

Weight Watcher's at Work Success!

OakFit Wellness has the pleasure of recognizing two employees, Cathy Teague of Information Technology and Michelle Leismer of the Prosecutor's Office for their hard work and discipline of reaching significant weight loss goals (over 50 pounds). Each employee has been awarded with a gift card to Great Lakes Crossing mall. We wish Cathy and Michelle continued success and wellness!

Weight Loss Testimonials

Have you ever had aches and pains from sitting too long in a chair and thought to yourself "It must be old age." I turned 50 a little over two years ago and I like the saying "50 is the new 30." I can do things now that I would have never been able to do when I was 30 years old. I have lost a total of 68 lbs by following the Weight Watchers program and attending the At Work meetings that Oakland County is a part of. They have taught me a healthy way to eat in order to have better health. So with the combination of going to meetings and help from my friends and co-workers I can say it truly works. I have reached my goal and am a lifetime member of Weight Watchers. I plan on never going back to the way I ate before because I like how I feel now.

- Cathy Teague, Information Technology



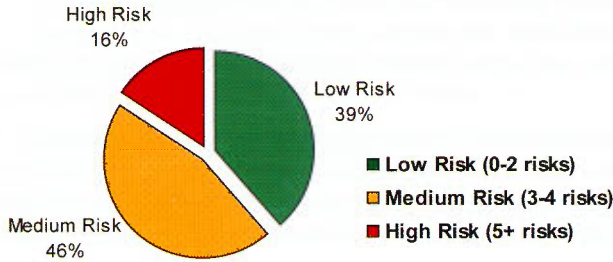
Cathy Teague, Nancy Scarlet, Director of Human Resources, and Michelle Leismer

Words cannot begin to express how much I love the Weight Watchers Program, and having it here at work is even better. I have been a member of Weight Watchers at Work since May of 2008. Since then, I have lost 56 pounds. In addition, I have gained the resources, knowledge and tools to keep losing weight and keep it off. Although I have more weight to lose, I know that the Weight Watchers at Work Program will help me on my weight loss journey. We have a wonderful WW leader, Laura, who motivates us every week to hang in there and keep doing the program. I know that with the help of my leader and my fellow WW at Work members I will one day reach my goal. I very much appreciate the Weight Watchers at Work Program because I know that it works - Michelle Leismer, Prosecutor's Office

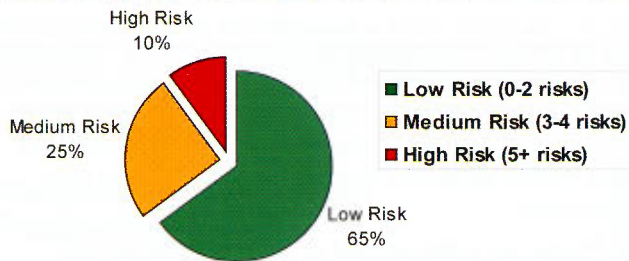
Risk Factors

Risk factors are conditions that shape the odds for early death and disability. They include habits, such as smoking and lack of exercise, and clinical measures, such as blood pressure and cholesterol. Below are pie charts that display aggregate data of where Oakland County employees rate with risk factors from 2007 through 2009. The low risk portion has consistently grown over the last three years while the high and medium risk categories have been reduced each year.

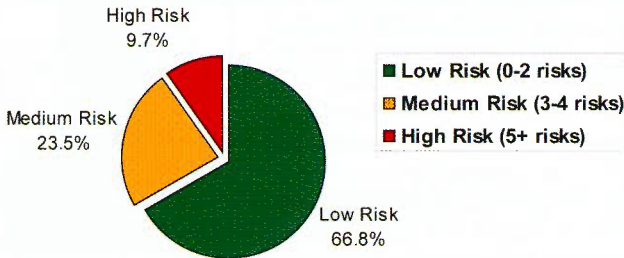
2007 Health Risk Status of Oakland County Employees



2008 Health Risk Status of Oakland County Employees



2009 Health Risk Status of Oakland County Employees



Looking for more information

Visit the OakFit website (www.oakgov.com/wellness) for additional Health Screening and Health Risk Assessment statistics and upcoming information on 2010 Health Screening Program. Also available are testimonials, coming events, weight management, recipes and a wealth of health related information.



Farm fresh produce is available at the Oakland County Farmer's Market

Oakland County employees have lowered risk factors! What does this mean?

- According to the American Journal of Health Promotion (2009), on average, one risk factor eliminated is equivalent to \$1,038 per year saved in health care costs. This also means less out of pocket health care costs for that employee.
- If the 27.8% increase (percentage gained between 2007 and 2009) of the low risks were calculated by the 930 employees that were screened all three years, this would have saved a minimum of \$268,365 annually and less overall out of pocket costs for employees.
- If all active employees could reduce one risk factor we could potentially save \$3,652,711 annually!

Puck, Michael, (2009, July). ROI even more important than BMI. Employee Benefit News, 34, 36.

Just a few health screening testimonials from your co-workers:



Along Paint Creek Trail in Rochester Hills

I get a stress test done every year due to family history of heart problems. I have never had anything show up on these tests. I felt as though I were very healthy. I had been going to the gym 3 days a week. Two years ago when we had the health screening here at work I decided to participate. My cholesterol was around 240 and my blood pressure was elevated. This prompted me to go to my Doctor and actually my cholesterol was 276. He started me on cholesterol medicine and my blood pressure was raised due to a blockage in my main artery. Since then I had a stent put in and am doing well. I might have had a heart attack if it had not been for the health screening. I am very grateful for this program.

- Water Resource Commissioner's Office

I participated in the Oakland County Health Screening program in April of 2008 & 2009. Going in, I was not overly concerned. I was fairly active (I played hockey and exercised regularly), was not overweight, and I actually felt very good. While most aspects of the screening were normal, I did have an abnormally high blood glucose level. A follow up visit with my personal physician revealed that I had Type II diabetes. I am receiving treatment in the form of oral medication. No one wants to find out they have a chronic illness. That being said, diabetes management can help prevent serious complications associated with the disease. I am pleased that I found out before complications set in.

- Water Resources Commissioner's Office



EMPLOYEES of the Month



Gaia Piir

You might not be able to pronounce her name at first glance, but Gaia Piir (pronounced Gay-uh Peer) is a name you should know. Not only does she help county departments obtain grants for equipment and training, but she also works to make county government more transparent and accessible. Piir, 39, is a grant compliance and program coordinator in the Fiscal Services Division. In the past year, she helped obtain grants for Oakland County and 20 local municipalities.

Not one to rest on her laurels, she helped her division garner the award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the 11th consecutive year. Every year, Piir takes hundreds of pages of county financing and pares them down to a format county residents can understand. "She has a very good attitude," says Piir's supervisor, Nancy Fournier. "She works to get projects done, is accurate and very reliable. It's a pleasure to work with her."

Piir, a county employee for 17 years, lives in Brandon Township. She enjoys spending time with her boyfriend Wayne and their English bulldog Daisy. She loves to travel. Back at home, she fills her time with gardening, scrapbooking and bicycling. As far as the name Gaia, her parents chose it out of a baby book because their names also start with the letter G. "Gaia means mother earth, but my parents were not hippies," Piir laughs. Her last name is Estonian.



Jason Warner

Ever wonder who is responsible for the way your cubicle or office is arranged and furnished? Meet Jason Warner, a GIS/CAD technician in the Facilities Management Division. The 27-year-old Farmington resident manages interior building alteration projects – whether they are outright architectural changes or office layouts and space planning. "Everyday is a different challenge, a different project," says Warner about why he loves his job. "As far as the future, staying in my department would be in my long term goals."

Warner's supervisor Ed Joss will be happy to hear that. "Jason has really stepped up to the plate to pick up more than his share of work. I am constantly giving him more work and many of the tasks are new to him. He is performing exceptionally well and never complains," Joss says. In October, Warner became the first person in Oakland County government to earn the prestigious Facility Management Professional credential. He garnered the FMP after completing a variety of courses in leadership, planning, operations and business.

Warner is an unofficial Sparty. When he is home with his new wife Christa (married July 25 – congratulations!), they like to attend Christa's alma mater's (Michigan State) football and basketball games.



John Hoppesch

John Hoppesch is one of those guys you'll either love or hate. He created and maintains the software that allows police to print speeding tickets in their patrol cars. Hoppesch, a 29-year-old Waterford resident, is an application analyst/programmer in the Information Technology Department who develops programs for CLEMIS, a computer system used by area law enforcement. He started with Oakland County seven years ago as a student. He now is developing software that will help local police manage their records better. "He is always available," says Hoppesch's supervisor, Vickie Aldred. "Any time of night he will assist on any problem or issue. He's just a very, very hard worker."

Hoppesch says the best part of his job is coming into contact with a variety of people. "I enjoy being able to work with people all across southeast Michigan, and being able to help people with their problems." When Hoppesch is not busy being the brains behind law enforcement software, he is back at school working on his MBA at Oakland University. In his free time, he heads for the great outdoors with his wife, Jen, and toddler son, Jack.



Lori Marks

If you send or receive mail through the county, chances are Lori Marks has her hands on it. "When she's in charge of the mail center, she makes sure every detail is taken care of," says Vickie Smith, Marks' supervisor at Support Services. "Everything she does, she does a good job on. She has good morals and she's a good worker."

A county employee for 19 years, Marks says she was surprised she is one of the employees of the month. But she won't let praise distract her from her work. She likes how busy she becomes during tax season because of the amount of mail. "It get's challenging during tax season, trying to keep up with the flow," Marks says. Marks has worked in the mail center for a decade. Prior to that, she worked with custodial services. She says she appreciates her co-workers. "I like everybody I work with - everyone is nice."

She has three grown children, two stepchildren and a six-year-old granddaughter, Morgan. During the summer, Marks plants flowers, camps and heads out on her personal watercraft. She and husband Daryl live in Waterford.

TELEGRAPHING Our Talents



Debbie's Workshop

In the corner of a basement is a dark workshop. Trays and drawers hold mysterious trinkets and ornaments. Paper is scattered and strewn about, with sharp scissors and utensils already pieced through the edges. Worn ribbons dangle from the edge of the counter, as if plummeting to their demise. Suddenly, a shadowy figure approaches the work area. The light begins to give way, and oddly enough, a gentle face is revealed. Supplies have been brought down to the basement. Silk flowers, stickers, buttons and glitter are among the items that are poured from the bag. This is no ordinary basement workshop - it's a card-making laboratory.

Debbie Hackman, of the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's Office has been creating handmade cards for over five years. To say these cards are pieces of art is an understatement. So much

detail and design effortlessly goes into each card. From the selection of card stock paper and color to all of the embellishments that decorate each card, they are truly gifts in and of themselves.

Debbie's card-making talent was brought forth by her daughter-in-law Tracy, who is an avid card-maker herself. She has had no formal classes, but did receive two brief tutorials at the craft store, which is where she gets her supplies. At her first attempt, birthday and Christmas cards were made. Seeing her very own hand made creation sparked something inside her. The hobby was in full force.

Debbie has produced custom cards for baby showers, bridal showers, weddings, in addition to the expected birthday, Christmas, sympathy and miscellaneous cards. She charges a nominal fee, but with the word-of-mouth advertising, it's no surprise that she will be busy making these exquisite creations for quite a while.

When asked about the fulfillment card-making gives her, Debbie answered, "A lot. It's a good stress reliever, and my work area in the basement is a nice space all to myself. I don't have to worry about my husband interfering." I expect she'll have to make him a card if he happens to read that comment.



Welcome Message from Treasurer Meisner



As the new County Treasurer I wanted to take this opportunity to extend my greetings to all of my colleagues throughout Oakland County government. I also wish to thank those who helped to make my transition so smooth, especially my predecessor, Pat Dohany, the Treasurer's Office staff, the Administration and County Commission.

Now that I'm on board, we in the Treasurer's Office are working to maintain and strengthen the professional standards of the office, balancing our budget and finding ways to provide greater value to the taxpayers - with less money.

As tax delinquencies increase and revenues continue to decline, please know that our office is prepared to meet this challenge and continue to bring in the money on which this county government operates.

I encourage any and all county employees to feel free to come by and visit the Treasurer's Office and our incredible and dedicated staff, or to contact me personally if I may ever be of service.

It's truly an honor to join a county government that sets the standard in Michigan and nationally for fiscal responsibility, prudent management and vision. I appreciate the chance to continue and build on that proud tradition.

Andy Meisner
Oakland County Treasurer

HBO Film 'You Don't Know Jack' Shoots at Oakland County Courthouse

In mid-October, County employees were star-struck as a film crew set up outside the south entrance of the Oakland County Courthouse to work on the HBO film "You Don't Know Jack." The film, about Dr. Jack Kevorkian, stars Al Pacino. Barry Levinson directs the film. His previous films include "Rain Man" and "The Natural."

Crews were in Michigan for two days, filming exterior scenes at the courthouse, in downtown Royal

Oak and near the closed Ducky's Bar and the Sagano Motel, both on Woodward Avenue in Pontiac. "We have been shooting in New York and Detroit, so our crew is 50/50 New York and Detroit," executive director Lydia Pilcher said to the Oakland Press. "We are every excited to come to Michigan because of your film incentives. Incentives are critical to filmmakers these days. This has been a terrific experience and I look forward to coming back to make another film."

Assistant Oakland County Prosecutor John Skrzynski, Oakland County Medical Examiner Dr. Ljubisa Dragovic and several Oakland County Deputies are portrayed by actors in the film. The movie is slated to come out the spring of 2010.



Brooksie Way Team Challenge Results

1/2 Marathon Team:

3rd place corporate team winners

Joe Murphy	FM&O
Ron Foon	Friend of the Court
Susan Moore	Information Technology
Traci Rink	Friend of the Court
Brett Battishill	Facilities Management
Rob Carroll	Information Technology
Sunil Ramakrishnappa	Information Technology
Katie West	Fiscal Services
Todd Fenton	FM&O
Carrie Fenton	(spouse)

5K Teams:

6th place corporate team 5K winners

Judy Cunningham	Corporation Counsel
Julie Skene	Econ Dev & Comm Affairs
Sarah Smith	Health Division
Lynn Doane	Econ Dev & Comm Affairs
Caitlin Dodge	Parks & Recreation
Hope Foreman	Parks & Recreation
Sandra Dorey	Parks & Recreation
Rebecca Dorey	(employee dependant)

4th place corporate team 5K winners

Michelle Morgan	Health Division
Justin Morgan	(spouse)
Teresa Brooks	Health Division
Kris Drautz	Health Division
Leigh-Anne Stafford	Health Division
Mari Liz John-Braddock	Health Division
Lisa McKay-Chiasson	Health Division
Karl Randall	Airport
Melissa Prowse	Parks & Recreation
Kirt Carson	Information Technology



PERSON TO PERSON

L. Brooks Patterson

Welcome to 2010! The New Year is upon us as we wrap up the first decade of the new millennium. I wish all of you much success this year.

As I prepare for my State of the County address February 3, I am reminded once again and humbled by how much every county employee contributes to making Oakland County one of the greatest places to live, work and raise a family.

Whether it is what the county saves through our Employee Suggestion Program, the amount employees contribute to charities through Casual Day funds or the day-to-day accomplishments of providing quality customer service to Oakland County residents and businesses, I want to take a moment to say "Thank you" for all you do.

Now that we are past the holidays, the weather outside may be frightful, but the winter activities are delightful. I invite all county employees, retirees and their families and friends to enjoy this year's Fire and Ice Festival in Rochester the weekend of January 29 – 30.

In its third year, Oakland County is partnering with the Rochester Downtown Development Authority to bring a blizzard of activities – ice skating, snowmen and angels, ice sculptures, tube sledding, horse-drawn carriage rides, to name a few.

Mark your calendars for the return of the Oakland Edge Hockey Tournament April 16 – 18. After scoring a goal of inaugural success, the tourney returns to the Onyx Arena in Rochester Hills for its second year.

So if you are a male amateur player of any skill level who is at least 30 or a female amateur player who is at least 21, sign up at www.oaklandedge.com. They'll even accept former pros retired at least five years. The tournament is limited to 30 teams.

Finally, it goes without saying, that in this extremely tough economy I appreciate the financial sacrifice readily accepted by the vast majority of Oakland County employees. We're managing our way through this challenge with your understanding and support.

Enjoy your winter!



To Direct Deposit Participants:

Would you like to help Oakland County be a greener employer and save some money?

Take the opportunity to receive your direct deposit notice electronically by e-mail, at the e-mail address of your choice.

That will save hundreds of sheets of paper and more than \$20,000 a year in postage alone.

After opening your e-mail attachment, you can read, print or save your direct deposit notice. In addition, you will receive your direct deposit notice by e-mail two days before the pay date. The electronic notice is exactly the same as the paper notice you now receive by the US Postal Service.

If you have not yet signed up for direct deposit of your paycheck, you may contact the Payroll Division.

If you have any questions please call Jamie at 248-858-0403 or email at hallj@oakgov.com

Employees go PINK to fight Breast Cancer

Oakland County employees once again joined the fight against breast cancer during October's National Breast Cancer Awareness month, raising an amazing \$3,677.50 for the Susan G. Komen Cancer Center with casual days and various fundraisers. Thank you to all who contributed!

Pumpkin, Arts & Treats Auction & Charity Fair

Photos by Cathy Shallal



The annual Pumpkin Auction is part of the County's Employee Charity Pledge Campaign and this year we added a few new events such as the Charity Fair, Silent Auction, Raffle and Pumpkin Giveaways. Fifteen pumpkins were decorated and auctioned off by L. Brooks Patterson and Phil Bertolini. The auction brought in \$850 which was distributed equally to our eight charities.

Attendees were able to browse the booths set up by the eight charities to see how their donations help others. Attendees enjoyed the healthy snacks donated by OakFit. Parks and Recreation sponsored the giveaways and donated real pumpkins for participants to take

home to carve for their Halloween celebrations.

Our Employee Charity Pledge Campaign brought in over \$30,000. Thank you to everyone who donated "just a little bit" of their time and/or talents to make this another fun and successful year, and thanks to everyone for their charitable donations!

To find more information about our campaign or see all the pumpkins and read stories from our charity organizations please go to my.oakgov.com and click on "Human Resources" tab then "Charity Pledge."



Tinkerbell, the Employees Favorite Choice, by Kari Schmalzel, Human Resources



Autopsy Attendant

Anyone who has ever driven past the Medical Examiner's Office has doubtlessly attempted to avoid thinking about what takes place inside. Not so for Danielle Jamieson! In 2002 Danielle, or Dani, was working toward a master's degree in Occupational Therapy when she left the program to accept a position as autopsy attendant at Oakland County in the Medical Examiner's Office. Why? Dani had always been drawn to both

medicine and law enforcement, so when she had the opportunity to work in a field that combined the two, she jumped at the chance.

The autopsy attendant is the first person to begin the autopsy process of a deceased individual. An autopsy attendant is also called a "diener," which is a German word meaning "servant." A "diener" is not a doctor, nor are they medical professionals. They perform their duties under the watchful eye of a medical doctor.

Dani said that before the actual autopsy begins, there is an intake process wherein she gathers and records information. Then Dani gets down to the business of evisceration of the organ block of the deceased. She makes an incision by which she removes, and then weighs the organs of the body of the decedent. Without becoming graphic, let us simply say that Dani performs several more procedures

on the body before the medical doctor begins a detailed examination. Once the autopsy is concluded, the "diener" sutures the body before it is released.

The purpose of the Medical Examiner's Office, Dani explained, is to attempt to determine the cause of death when it appears to be unnatural or undeterminable. Unnatural causes of death include homicide, suicide and accidents. Therefore, the "diener" is on the lookout for anything that might be considered a "remarkable finding," which is anything out of the ordinary that could be a clue to the cause of death.

Dani believes that the most rewarding part of her job is providing closure to families, even if closure isn't immediate—as in the case of homicide where results are provided to law enforcement. Dani thinks EVERYTHING about her work is interesting and fascinating. She claims she never has the same day twice!

Oakland County has a team of six autopsy attendants, including Dani: Shawn Dunn, April Leder, Ted Muraski, Steve Tighe and Autopsy Attendant Supervisor Charlie Smith. Although half the autopsy attendants currently are women, Dani was the second woman ever hired for the position. The first was Roxanne O'Shaughnessy, hired in 1977.

Dani believes the following sentence, translated from Latin, sums up the commitment of the Medical Examiner's Office:

"This is the place where death rejoices to teach those who live."

The Oakland County Youth Assistance Coordinating Council, at its 2009 Annual Meeting, presented "Champion of Youth" awards to two deserving recipients

Robert Ziegler was recognized as a long-time member of Youth Assistance and treasurer of the South Lyon Youth Assistance and former treasurer of the Youth Assistance Coordinating Council. Mr. Ziegler's devoted involvement over 20 years has included providing his professional expertise as an accountant.

The Oakland County Bar Association (OCBA) was recognized for providing mentors, supporting Youth Assistance projects with fundraisers and volunteers, and collaborating on three free legal clinics in 2009. Kurt Schnelz, president of the Oakland County Bar Association, and Judith Cunningham, Oakland County corporation counsel and treasurer of the OCBA, accepted the award on behalf of the organization.



Joe Wauldron, the Chairperson for the Oakland County Youth Assistance Coordinating Council; Mary Schusterbauer, Chief of Youth Assistance Services; and Robert Ziegler, award recipient

kudos coming & going

births



Shannon Penz, of the Oakland County Clerk's Legal Division, and her husband, Kevin, welcomed son Joshua Penz on 11/1/09.

Christopher

Gianakos, Drain Maintenance/Inspection Unit, and wife Nicole, had a baby boy, Charlie, on 10/1/09.

Julie Kern, Mapping Services Unit, water resources commissioner and husband Richard had a baby girl, Alexis, on 10/21/09.

Holly Waxler, County Executive Administration, and husband DJ, celebrated the birth of their son, Cole Daloisio Waxler, on 10/7/09.

Cynthia Stanton, Prosecutor's Office, and husband, Patrick, welcomed Reed Thomas Stanton, born 10/4/09.

Ami Hadden, Health Division, and her husband Jim welcomed their son Griffon on 9/22/09.

Sue Dignard, Health Division is the proud grandmother of Noah David, born 12/7/09.

Justin Davis, Prosecutor's Office, and his wife, Sarah, welcomed new daughter, Grace Bailey, born 11/12/09.

Eric Dunlap, Management and Budget, Equalization, and his wife, Kelly, welcome new daughter, Madison, on 3/26/09.

Christine Sharber, Support Services, and her husband, Ryan, welcome Ava Joelle on 7/10/09.

Tare Wigod, Prosecutor's Office, and wife, Kerri Middleditch, welcomed daughter Sela Gabrielle Wigod, born 9/22/09.

marriages

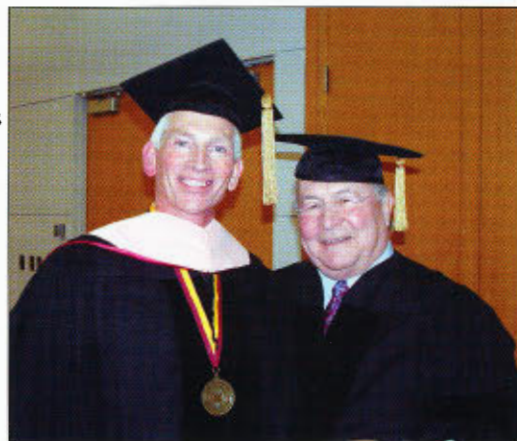


Congratulations to Rachel (Meyers) and Mike Boyd! The couple was married on October 24 at Springfield Oaks Activity Center.

kudos



Is there a doctor in the house? There is in the Health Division. Public Health Administrator Tom Fockler graduated from Central Michigan University with his Doctor of Health Administration degree at Rose Arena in Mount Pleasant Saturday, December 12, 2009. Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson spoke at Fockler's commencement ceremony, where Patterson received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. After six years of 63 credit hours of course work, a 151-page dissertation, working for Oakland County and fostering nine kids, you could say Fockler has earned his degree.



Tom Fockler and L. Brooks Patterson

Joe Rozell, Oakland County's director of elections, recently received a STAR Award (Serving Taxpayers and Residents) from County Clerk Ruth Johnson. Rozell led the way when the county Elections Division took over ballot programming from a private vendor, saving taxpayers \$180,000 a year. He also led efforts to launch the Clerk's Absentee Ballot Tracker.

Dan Stencil, Parks and Recreation, was elected to a three-year term as the NRPA Great Lakes Region Representative.

Congratulations to Michigan Recreation and Park Association election winners: Sue Wells, as president elect and Jim Dunleavy, as vice president elect. Their tour of duty begins at the 2010 Annual MRPA Conference in February. In addition, Dan Stencil was elected to a three-year term as the NRPA Great Lakes Region Representative.

Michigan Recreation and Park Association awarded Oakland County Parks the 2010 MRPA Innovative Park Resource Award for the new groundwater and storm water management system at Waterford Oaks

County Park. Holly Warnos, a part-time employee who assists with the adaptive recreation programs, received the Young Professional for Therapeutic Recreation Award. Mike Willhite, who passed away in October, received a posthumous Park Resources Leadership Award. These awards will be presented in February 2010.

Three Oakland County employees received the Domestic Violence Prevention Awards from the Oakland County Coordinating Council against Domestic Violence: Honorable Colleen O'Brien, Sixth Circuit Court, Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Tricia Dare and Derek Meinecke, Oakland County Prosecutor's Office.

fond farewells

Gina Flavin, youth assistance caseworker, left county employment 9/8/09.

Paulette Michel - 9/18/09, judicial secretary to Judge McDonald, left county employment to start her own law practice.

Keela Johnson, court clerk for Judge Young, left county employment 10/2/09.

retirements



Chithra Chakrapani,
Information
Technology, retired
on 10/23/09 from the
Application Services
division.

Chandra Baalu,
Information

Technology, retired on 11/12/09 from the
Technical Services and Networking division.

Diana Hensel, Information Technology,
retired on 12/3/09 from the Technical
Services and Networking division.

Cheryl Boyle, office assistant II in Youth
Assistance - retired 11/2/09.

Kathy Kunez, Health Division, retired on
July 17, 2009.

Congratulations to Sgt. Kenneth Hurst of
the Oakland County Sheriff's Department
Office, who is retiring after 30 years of
service. Hurst, who worked for the Detroit
Police Department prior to Oakland
County, is a former substation commander
with experience in road patrol, protective
services, accident investigation, parks,
administration and training. Hurst was
recently appointed as Chief of Police for the
City of Keego Harbor.



Sgt. Kenneth Hurst

WHERE AM I?

I am eight years old, my feet hurt really bad and I am very cold.

Why don't I have a warm bed? Why do I have to sleep outside?

I've been sitting in the rain all night.

The policeman found my mommy and I at a Meijer very late at night.

I was very tired and hungry when the policeman dropped me off at this place.

Where am I? Why can't my mommy come with me? Who are all these people?

When I woke up, I was scared.

I miss my mommy.

All these new faces were talking to me but I didn't know what to say.

I don't know how to speak their language; no one can understand my jibberish.

What are these sticks they are giving me and telling me to eat my food with?

I don't know what they use these for, but I always use my hands with food.

There are a lot of kids here, but I don't know how to play with them.

Is there something wrong with me?

I hit people because I don't know right from wrong.

What is this room and why is it raining inside? Why do I have to go there everyday?

I don't want to go in the raining room.

Everyday people bring me worksheets with numbers and letters on them.

I think they're fun.

After being in this strange place for a few months, I feel safe.

My bed is so soft, I am warm and dry.

Everyday I get meals and snacks that make my tummy really full.

There are a lot of toys that I can play with.

I am starting to act better.

I say "sorry" when I do bad things.

Maybe this place isn't as bad as I thought.

These people have worked hard to help save me.

I am eight years old; I am living at Oakland County Children's Village shelter care.

I am happy to be here, but I still miss my mommy.

Composed by a current resident of Children's Village

Behind The Scenes



Health Division Mass Vaccination Clinics

The 2009 H1N1 (swine) flu vaccination may be a pain in the arm, but it was no pain in the neck to organize the Health Division's mass vaccination clinics. Not for the hundred-plus Health Division workers who came together to vaccinate someone every three seconds.

"I'm just totally impressed with the whole process of providing a service to the community," said Theresa White, a public health nurse. "This is what public health is about."

Going behind the scenes of Oakland County's 2009 H1N1 mass vaccination clinics makes one realize it has been a labor of love.



The story began five years ago when the Health Division realized the world was due for a flu pandemic. Health workers began to conduct seasonal flu vaccination clinics in the manner they would for pandemic flu.

Years of practice paid off. The Health Division held its first H1N1 mass vaccination clinics in October, a month after they began seasonal flu clinics. In a matter of 10 hours, nurses inoculated more than 12,000 individuals against the H1N1 virus.



Health personnel remained focused throughout their clinics, despite the physical and mental challenges of vaccinating so many. "Having a positive mindset is something we have to do," White said. "I take one client at a time. I don't get rushed."

One of the great challenges they faced was comforting children. "I use a lot of touch, get down on their level, and stoop down to my knees. I smile, praise them," White said.

For many kids, her method did the trick. White recalled with a smile one boy who was worried less about his shot and was more fascinated by the news media. "This little kid had just gotten his shot. The TV reporters were standing around, and he wanted to show them his belly dance," she said.



Teamwork was key to manage the H1N1 mass vaccination clinics, said Tracy Feneley, a central support services supervisor. "The minute we get there, we start unloading the trucks," she said.

At the Palace of Auburn Hills clinic, they set up dozens of tables for the vaccination stations and stanchions for the crowd in 45 minutes. "If our job is done, we go over to logistics to see who needs help. I think that's why we get it set-up so fast – we work as a team," Feneley said.

Their next job was to assist people who have a long wait in line. Feneley said most handled their time well. Health Division greeters kept the thousands who showed up

happy by talking to them and using a bit of humor.

Distractions helped too. "The last time we were at the Palace, Automotion (the Piston's dance team) came in to practice. We lost a lot of men. We had to keep telling people to get back in line," Feneley said.

Everything fell into place at the clinics because of effective planning. Enter Leigh-Anne Stafford. She's a planning and evaluation supervisor in Health. She sought sites that have lots of parking, buildings with good flow and room to hold all the vaccination stations.

A major factor in coordinating a successful clinic, however, was flexibility Stafford said. "We try to be fluid and flexible and deal with change right away," she said. "We've been doing this so long, we have confidence the clinics will go well."

Hanging on a wall in the Health Division is a list of five goals. Three of them are to be committed to people, excellence in service and efficiency. There is little doubt Health Division workers met these goals in every H1N1 mass vaccination clinic.

The proof came at the end of the line at each clinic. "We got so many compliments and thank yous – I would go home and think about that at night," Feneley said.

