

Telegraph



State of the County Serves Up Harsh Budget Realities

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Behind the Scenes

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson was in a positive and upbeat mood as he delivered his 14th Annual State of the County Address to a capacity crowd of more than 400 people at the Michigan State University Management Conference Center in Troy on February 7th.

During his nearly one hour presentation, Mr. Patterson reviewed the status of his "Legacy" programs such as Automation Alley, Emerging Sectors, Wireless Oakland and Main Street Oakland. But he was also candid in talking about the financial challenges Oakland County will confront over the next few years because of a less than robust economy which has been severely impacted by declining property values and home foreclosures.

"As property values decline, there is a direct inverse relationship to the challenges we all face in government when it comes to balancing the budget," Mr. Patterson told an overflow crowd and the thousands listening to his speech on News Talk 760 WJR Radio. "In 2008, the budget challenge that we must adjust to is a projected shortfall of \$5.1 million. In 2009 the challenge rises to \$14.8 million. In 2010 the shortfall we are estimating at this time could be as high as \$33.5 million."

Cont. on P. 3



Mr. Patterson beaming as his new grandson's image is shown.

Retirement Incentive Program Geared Toward Budget Savings

Recently the Telegraph sat down with Nancy Scarlet, director of Human Resources and Judy Fandale, retirement supervisor to discuss the new Voluntary Separation Incentive Program for Retirement.

Question: What prompted the retirement incentive offer?

Scarlet: The budget situation the county is facing prompted the need to look at how we might pare down the size of the workforce.

Question: Who is eligible for the program?

Fandale: You have to be at least 60 years of age with 8 years of county service or 55 years of age with 25 years of service.

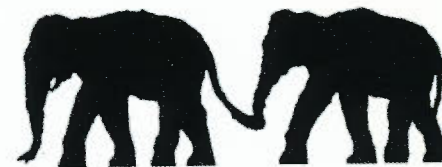
Cont. on P. 3

Big Star Buried Near Local Mall

By Barbara Merryfield



Driving down Telegraph road, most of us are unaware of the elephant gravesite next to the Summit Place mall. While this sounds like an urban legend, it is in fact true. For the past 35 years, an open patch of land has been the final resting place of Little Jenny, a female Asian elephant.



As the story goes, Little Jenny's career was extensive, spanning over 30 years and included a role in the 1954 film *Elephant Walk* with Elizabeth Taylor, Dana Andrews and Peter Finch. "Reportedly she was the lead elephant that broke through the wall during the stampede scene," said Dave Ross, director of Oakland County Facilities Management.

Her career began in 1940 as a performer with the Cole Brothers Circus, where she entertained crowds until the circus closed in 1954. Little Jenny then toured with the King Brothers Circus for a season in 1955, before joining Paul and Dorothy Kelly as a performer in their show. For years they toured the country performing for the circus and carnivals.

In the early 1970's, a weekend fundraising event for the Oakland County Sheriff's Department brought Little Jenny and the circus to town. After helping set up equipment, Little Jenny and her companions were tied to a billboard on Telegraph Road. As these majestic giants stood along the busy stretch of road, hoping to draw attention to the upcoming event, Little Jenny died.

The Health Department issued a special permit for her burial in an open field and a local contractor, who was working in the area laying drainage pipe, dug her grave. In a ceremony staged by the circus, the other elephants paid tribute to their fallen comrade by pushing her into the unmarked grave.

However, her story does not end here. In fact, confusion over the location of her gravesite has led to speculation of her exhumation. For years, rumors have circulated that Little Jenny was unearthed during the expansion of the mall parking lot. One claimed her remains were donated to researchers at Wayne State University. Another states there was a plan to display her skeleton inside the mall, which was scrapped due to lack of funds.

According to area experts, Jeheskel Shoshani, president of Elephant Research Foundation and Richard B. Stamps, professor of Anthropology at Oakland University and member of the Oakland County Historical Commission, neither rumor is true. Little Jenny remains in the same open field where she was buried years ago serving as a reminder of Oakland County's unique history.

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Executive Office Building
2100 Pontiac Lake Road
Waterford, MI 48328

Phone: (248) 858-1048

Fax: (248) 858-5111

e-mail: dustmanb@oakgov.com

We welcome and encourage you to send us your articles, photographs, suggestions and comments.

Editor: Robert E. Dustman

Design: Michael Zack

Production: Pam Tremble

Contributors: Kristie Everett-Zamora
Carmen Talbot
Pam Tremble

Photography: Michael Zack

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THE LAST REAL CIRCUS PARADE

These photos were snapped July 9, 1955 at the point where Saginaw St. and Oakland Avenue meet near the north end of the Pontiac Michigan business district. Thus, the parade route did not quite reach the center of the city. Nevertheless, since the showgrounds were at the north edge of the city limits, the parade route was still a long one. It came south on Saginaw, made a sharp turn and headed back north via Oakland Ave.

Charlie Luckey constructed this bright red Bandwagon especially for King Bros. Circus.



A colorful horse drawn wagon loaded with clowns heads north on Oakland Avenue



A genuine steam powered calliope brings up the rear of the procession and lets everyone within at least a mile know that the circus is in town!

Source:

<http://hartlandsmith.tripod.com/parade.html>

Mr. Patterson, however, added that he and his financial team are reacting to the situation now to avoid what he called “going over that cliff in three years.”

The County Executive says his Budget Task Force knows how to respond to these budget challenges because “we’ve been there before.” He pointed out that in 1994 his administration resolved a \$24.5 million shortfall and ten years later, in 2004, put the breaks on a projected \$33.7 million budget challenge.

“In both of those cycles we took quick and decisive action to balance the budget,” Mr. Patterson said. “We imposed a wage and hiring freeze, offered an Early Out package, travel was banned; and the lid was clamped down on new capital projects. We made then, and continue to make, systemic changes in costly healthcare and employee benefits.”

He said the basic remedial steps employed in 1994 and 2004 to balance the budget are once again in play. These include a hiring and promotion freeze, plus a retirement incentive package for those eligible to retire. With the “retirement incentive” program, Patterson hopes to reduce the county workforce by some 150-200 employees.

Mr. Patterson concluded his remarks on Oakland’s financial outlook by indicating with no growth expected in property values for the near future, the county would most likely face budget challenges through 2014.



Lessenger Elementary School students demonstrate their progress in learning Mandarin Chinese.

Retirement Incentive, Cont. from P. 1

Question: How many employees fall into this group?

Scarlet: In terms of total county workforce the number is around 500. Individuals represented by a union may or may not be offered this option depending upon the status of their labor contract. Letters went out to 354 employees who currently meet the eligibility criteria.

Question: How many people would you like to see take the offer?

Fandale: We would like to see at least 150 people take it.

Question: What would that do for the budget?

Scarlet: 150 retirements equates to a potential ongoing savings of \$12.6 million provided those people are not replaced. This is really a tool to help departments/elected officials with their budget tasks. Vacancies created by the program will give departments/elected officials greater opportunity to reorganize their operations and limit the impact on remaining employees.

Question: What is the average buy-out?

Fandale: The average buy-out is estimated to be \$31,800.

Question: What is the average savings per position?

Scarlet: Taking into account the average salary and benefits, the savings per position is around \$84,000.

Question: Where will the money for the retirement bonuses come from?

Fandale: The money will come from the Defined Benefit Pension Program which is funded at approximately 112%.

Question: How will the Retirement Incentive Program affect the workloads of employees who remain and ultimately the level of service provided to the public?

Scarlet: We’re going to have to see how that plays out. I’m hoping departments will look at ways to re-engineer their business processes to provide services in a more efficient way so citizens won’t feel the impact of the reductions and employees will be able to handle the remaining workload. However, we have an obligation to operate under a balanced budget. If we can’t do it through these types of programs, there will have to be decisions made regarding prioritization of programs within each area.

Question: Do you expect to offer this program again?

Scarlet: Hard to say at this time. There was the prior Early Out program in 2003 and we lost a lot of top management. This is another program where we will lose much of our intellectual capital and institutional memory. Before we would offer something further, we would have to evaluate the impact on the organization. At some point you bleed the organization of its brain power and it may end up being more costly.

Scarlet and **Fandale** also pointed out that the retirement unit is offering one-on-one meetings with employees to evaluate the Incentive Program and their retirement options. Retirement classes are also being offered to assist employees in planning for their retirement.

Employees can make an appointment for retirement counseling at anytime. Employees eligible for the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program must sign up between April 1st and May 30th and then leave county service on or before August 31st.

Judge Warren's New Book Warns of Impending Crisis from Within

Oakland County Circuit Judge Michael Warren had an epiphany one day about ten years ago. He realized after graduating from law school that his academic career in college lacked a proper grounding in American history and the First Principles as laid down by the Founding Fathers.

"Even though I was an American History major in college, I didn't have as much grounding as I thought I should have in order to participate effectively in a democracy," Judge Warren said.

It became clear to him that an incredibly poor job was being done of educating students and citizens alike about the founding principles and American history including why studying these tenets are important to this country's survival as a free democracy.

So Judge Warren began researching and writing. The end result of his efforts is a book entitled: "America's Survival Guide, How to Stop America's Impending Suicide by Reclaiming our First Principles in History." Not exactly a title that rolls easily off the tongue, but nonetheless a very thoughtful, detailed and provocative look at the basic constitutional principles upon which this country was founded.

Judge Warren points out in his book that unlike some other countries that are governed by ethnic and religious ties or traditions, America is a country built upon basic principles enshrined in the Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

But he also warns that if we fail to remember or ignore these guiding principles in our daily lives, then we run the risk of splintering apart into racial, cultural or ethnic divisions as happened recently in the former Yugoslavia.

Judge Warren also takes the media culture in this country to task for spending what he believes is an inordinate amount of time on celebrities like Britney Spears and Lindsey Lohan rather than focusing on coverage of more important current events.

"We have an educational system that devalues social studies and a political class that spends time on the minutiae of pork barrel spending initiatives at the expense of America's broader themes," Judge Warren noted.

Judge Warren hopes his book awakens people to the fact there is an impending crisis in this country and that each person has a responsibility to take the initiative to become better educated about America's history and founding principles.

What's kept us a free country and one not at war with itself, says Judge Warren, is a wonderful Constitution given to us by the Founding Fathers and a belief system to go along with it.

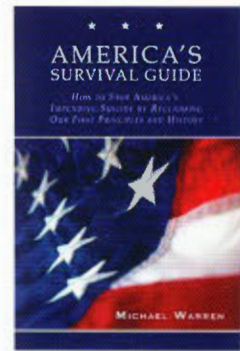
"If we forget what those beliefs are, it becomes easier to fall victim to an oppressive government or suffer a complete breakup," Judge Warren continues. "We've had one Civil War and to say it can't happen again isn't true."

At the end of the book, Judge Warren offers a set of specific recommendations on how to change the educational system; how to celebrate our historic holidays in a meaningful way and how to change the way the media views things and how we can participate in that process.

"This is not a magic bullet where people read the book and suddenly everything will be great," Judge Warren said. "After all it took a couple of generations to get to the state we are in this country today."

For more information and to read excerpts from Judge Warren's book, please go to www.AmericasSurvivalGuide.com.

The book, published by Mill City Press, is priced at \$15.99.



Smoking Cessation Drugs

Below is the current list of brand name drugs that are covered under the county's health insurance program to help employees quit smoking. Please be advised the drugs on this list may change in the future.

Navitus approved list

Brand Name	Generic Name
Zyban Tab 150mg SR	Bupropion HCL Tab 150mg
Nicotine PT24	Nicotine patch
Nicotine Polacrilex Gum	Nicotine gum
Nicotine Polacrilex Lozq	Nicotine lozenges
Nicotine Kit	Nicotine patch kit
Chantix Tab	Varenicline Tartrate Tab 1mg
Chantix Pak	Varenicline Tartrate Tab .5mg x 11 & Tab 1mg x 14
Nicotrol Inhaler	Nicotine Inhaler System 10mg
Nicotrol NS SPR 10mg/ml	Nicotine Nasal Spray 10mg/ml



HAP approved list

GEQ = available as a generic equivalent	Brand Name
QL = quantity limit applies	Zyban (GEQ)
	Nicotine patches (QL)
	Nicotine gum (QL)
	Nicotine lozenge (QL)
	Chantix (QL)
	Commit (QL)
	Nicoderm CQ (QL)
	Nicotrol Inhaler (QL)
	Nicotrol NS (QL)
	Nicotrol (QL)

Easy Ways to Lower Fuel Costs

High fuel prices have impacted all of us both at the County and as individuals. By paying attention to fuel saving measures we can reduce costs significantly. Some of the following are obvious and some may not have occurred to you.

- **Check Tire Pressure Regularly**

One under-inflated tire can cut fuel economy by 2 percent per pound of pressure below the proper inflation level. Driving on under-inflated tires also increases the likely-hood of getting a flat tire.

- **Clean out the Trunk and Eliminate Unnecessary Weight**

Every 200 lbs. of unnecessary weight reduces fuel efficiency by one mile per gallon.

- **Avoid Long Idling**

A vehicle gets 0 miles per gallon while it idles. When idling for long periods of time, shut off the engine. Restarting an engine will use about the same amount of gas as idling for 30 seconds.

- **Buy Gasoline in the Morning**

Several trade publications suggest buying gasoline when the temperature is cold and gasoline is at its densest. Consumers are charged for fuel based on volume not density. Heat causes fuel to expand and overflow. Therefore, don't completely fill the gas tank in hot weather.

- **Drive at Moderate Speeds for two reasons:**

(1) Driving fast wastes gas. Traveling at 65 miles per hour uses 15 percent more fuel than driving at 55 mph. By adhering to speed limits, you will conserve fuel. In commuter traffic look two or more vehicles ahead rather than simply watching the driver in front of you. This enables you to accelerate and decelerate more gradually.

(2) Wind drag is a key source of reduced fuel economy, causing an engine to work hard, thus reducing fuel economy. The faster you drive the more air the vehicle must push out of the way. Also, to minimize wind drag, keep the windows rolled up. This allows air to flow over the body, rather than drawing it inside the cabin.

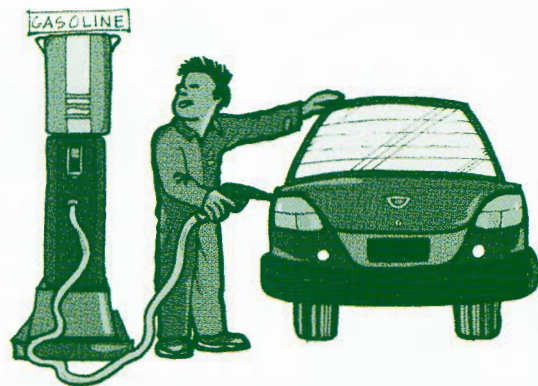
- **Use Cruise Control During Highway Driving**

Unnecessary changes in speed are wasteful.

- **Avoid Jackrabbit Starts**

A car consumes extra fuel when accelerating. To maximize fuel economy avoid rapid acceleration and fast braking.

The Oakland County car fleet's annual fuel bill is \$2.2 million. These measures can result in a 15 percent reduction which amounts to \$330,000 per year. On a personal basis, your savings can be hundreds of dollars per year.



Charity Pledge Campaign

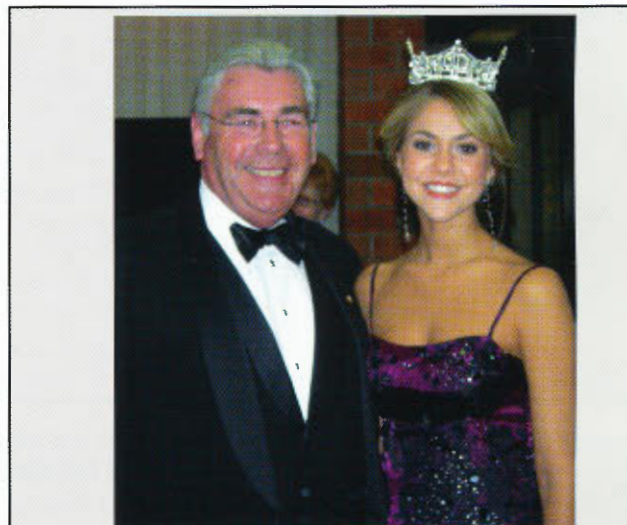
One of the greatest gifts anyone can give or receive is the gift of hope. Thanks to the "giving nature" of our many employees, people afflicted with a wide range of problems will get a chance at a better life.

The 2008 Charity Pledge Campaign was a huge success with \$54,000 raised through payroll deductions. The program was expanded this year to give employees an opportunity to contribute to seven different charities and the response was very positive.

Much of the credit for the success of the campaign goes to Charity Pledge Campaign Chair Cathy Shallal, manager of Human Resources and her staff which included Kristy Slosson and Colleen Stacy from Employee Records.

This campaign would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our team captains in the various departments, all of whom were unselfish in volunteering their time and talents to this worthwhile project. Also a big thank you is in order for Jamie Hall in Payroll who kept track of the donations.

The money contributed by our employees will help ALS of Michigan, The American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Community Health Charities of Michigan, Easter Seals of Michigan, Rainbow Connection and United Way continue their important mission of offering hope and enhancing the quality of life for thousands of deserving citizens in our area.



Commissioner John A. Scott with the former Miss Michigan and current Miss America Kirsten Haglund of Farmington Hills. This resident of Oakland County received proclamations from Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners on March 1, 2008 at the official homecoming of Miss America in Muskegon, Michigan. Commissioner John A. Scott presented her with the proclamations on behalf of the county.



EMPLOYEES of the Month



Annette Walker

Working in the clinic of the Womens, Infants and Childrens Supplemental Food Program (WIC) in the Health Division gives Annette Walker a chance to interact and help people on a daily basis. Annette, an auxiliary health worker who also does marketing for the WIC program, finds that a very fulfilling experience. Prior to her involvement in the WIC program during the past 10 years, Annette did brief stints in the Friend of the Count office and as an intern in the Budget Division. "I just love working with people and families," Annette said.

Away from the office, Annette enjoys traveling – just about anywhere – but especially to California, Florida and New York where she often stops in to visit former colleagues.

"Annette has done an outstanding job working with our community partners to develop several WIC Baby Showers for pregnant low income moms," commented George Miller, Health Division manager. "Her dedication to these women has been instrumental in raising awareness regarding the major issues and barriers they face in having a normal, healthy pregnancy." Annette, who lives in Pontiac, has three grown children and four grandkids whom she says "stick to her like skin."



Becka Ricker

As a collections specialist with the Reimbursement Division, Becka Ricker deals daily with Circuit Court defendants – taking financial statements, garnishing wages, doing tax intercepts and working with accounts in an effort to get these individuals to pay as much as they can toward their financial responsibilities.

You would think this might not be the best job in the world – but Becka really enjoys what she does. "It's kind of bizarre, but I like dealing with the public even though they're defendants," Becka said. "I like being able to help them with their accounts."

Becka has worked in Circuit Court Reimbursement for the past four years after being transferred from Juvenile Court Reimbursement. During her 14 year career with the county, Becka also spent a couple months in the Jury Office as a PTNE waiting for something to open up. "Becka is a valuable employee ... who is always willing to help out with anything that needs to be done," said Judi Lockhart, chief of the Reimbursement Division.

During her off hours, Becka likes to jazzercise, read and spend time with her family. Becka lives in Waterford.



Ralph Openshaw

"Nothing shocks me anymore," said Ralph Openshaw, an investigator with the Medical Examiners Office. After eight years working homicides in the Detroit Police Department, followed by nine years with the ME's office out here, Ralph has pretty much seen it all.

His job is to conduct death scene investigations, photograph autopsies, take reports and then pass all the information he collects on to the doctor who will ultimately make a final determination of cause of death in a case.

Ralph's job doesn't leave him a whole lot of time to relax, since he's usually on call 24/7. But in those rare instances when he can get away, Ralph likes to travel especially to the warmth of the Caribbean. "Ralph's investigative experience has greatly benefited the county and he has been recognized many times for his excellent crime scene investigation reports and investigations," said Robert Gerds, administrator of the Medical Examiner's office. "He is a team player and will always go the extra mile, not only to get the job done, but to do so in a professional manner."

Ralph and his wife of 26 years, who live in Clinton Township, have two adult children.



Sue Martinez

Sue Martinez wears many different hats as a public health field nurse in the Pontiac area. Sue, who came to the Health Division from the private sector 14 years ago, helped develop the popular "Crib Notes" program to address the infant mortality problem in the City of Pontiac. As an active participant in the program, Sue conducts classes at the middle-school level to teach students about the risk factors associated with infant mortality.

On a daily basis she also makes home visits to work with high risk and postpartum mothers and their infants. In addition, Sue provides services and various resources to teen moms who attend the alternative high school programs. Her other responsibility is giving immunizations at the Health Clinic and also in the Women, Infant and Children's Program (WIC). "The best part of what I do is working with the clients," Sue said. "I truly love the individual client contact and developing relationships."

Away from work, Sue is very involved in her church and also busy with her husband and two teenage children. She enjoys gardening and walking. "Sue consistently exceeds expectations in meeting client needs," said George Miller, manager of the Health Division. Sue and her family live in Clarkston.

When employees walk into the Executive Office Building each morning, they are greeted by a comfortable, clean work environment – courtesy of our extraordinary custodial unit. The work of the EOB cleaning crew is overseen by Don Chevalier, custodial supervisor II, who has been taking care of our workplaces for more than 30 years. “It was a big surprise when my boss announced to me I was being considered a candidate for Employee of the Month,” Don said. “I really like working with and meeting so many good people and watching the county grow into the fine governmental structure it is today.”

Away from the rigors of the job, Don enjoys collecting model classic cars and traveling to the Upper Peninsula to visit family and friends. He’ll have a whole lot more time to do that when Don, unfortunately for us but good for him, retires this coming fall. “Don demonstrates his commitment to providing the highest level of service possible to all his customers on a daily basis,” said Don’s boss Bob Fowlkes. “He takes great pride in the work he and his staff do.”

Don and his Pekinese, Franklin, alias Shredder, live in Waterford.



Count Your Steps Celebrates 5-Year Anniversary

These days you can't pick up a newspaper, listen to the radio or watch television without some medical expert or doctor warning about the dangers of childhood obesity. The fact is childhood obesity has become the pandemic of the new millennium.

This alarming health crisis is now engulfing children throughout the entire world. It's as big a threat as global warming or a pandemic flu. In the last several decades, the percentage of overweight children and adolescents has more than doubled and it is only getting worse. If we don't address the problem now, this generation of young people may be the first generation in history not to outlive their parents.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 16% of children (more than 9 million) six to nineteen years of age are overweight or obese. The United States Department of Health and Human Services reports overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of becoming overweight or obese adults, and that figure jumps to 80% if one or more parents are overweight or obese.

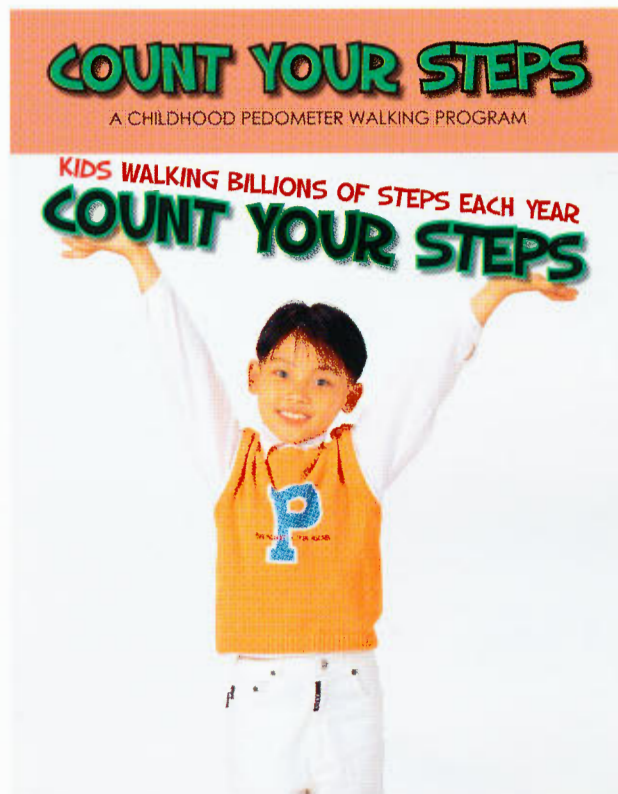
These statistics create a certain urgency to deal with the problem of obesity early in life. That's why Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson started the Count Your Step pedometer walking program in 2004, as a proactive and positive step in the right direction to get kids exercising regularly and eating nutritionally.

Since the program began, more than 100,000 third and fourth grade students in over 200 Oakland County schools have experienced first hand the positive benefits of regular daily exercise.

2008 marks the fifth anniversary for Count Your Steps, and already 20,000 students and 150 schools are on board and ready to starting stepping. This year's program will run from April 7th – May 2nd, 2008.

Count Your Steps is made possible because of the generous support of corporate sponsors such as POH Medical Center, General Motors, HealthPlus of Michigan, Radio Disney, and HAP.

For more information about Count Your Steps, contact Oakland County Health Division at 28-452-9174 or visit www.countyoursteps.org.



Share Your Story with HR's Diversity Corner

Have you read HR's Diversity Corner on the OakSource website yet?

The Diversity Corner is a place to discover things from the past and present that you didn't know about, places to visit around town, and stories shared by our own employees.

Take a moment to reflect on all the little things that make your life—yours. We invite you to share your stories about your family traditions, history, career, cultural celebrations, foods, and religious events.

Possible monthly Heritage Topics include Chinese American in May; Dutch in June; German in July; Australian in August; Hispanic in September, Disability Awareness in October and Salute to Veteran's in November. If you have suggestions for topics that you would find helpful to have in our Diversity Corner, please contact diversity@oakgov.com.

Visit the Diversity Corner website at www.oakgov.com/intranet/diversity/



BENEFITS

Q & A

Q I've heard that we have a new prescription drug carrier. What does that mean for me and my family?

A It means that Navitus Health Solutions will be the administrator for Oakland County's prescription drug coverage. There will be no changes in employee contributions or prescription drug co-payments.

Q Will I receive a new card?

A Yes, new cards were mailed to each employee and their eligible family members the week of March 17. If you've not received your booklet and cards, please contact Navitus directly at 1-866-333-2757. The cards were mailed with the Navitus employee handbook. You should have also received new Blue Cross cards that do not have the prescription logo on it. Just present your new Navitus card to the pharmacist when you need to order a prescription.

Q Will my pharmacy still participate with Navitus?

A Navitus has all of the major chains and they have been diligently working on contracting with all of the pharmacies in our area that employees use. If by some chance yours has not been included, it can be added. For a complete list of participating pharmacies, go to www.navitus.com. Keep in mind this list continues to increase.

Q I was previously using mail order through MedCo/BCBS. How will this change affect my prescription?

A Any prescriptions with refills remaining that was being filled through MedCo mail order will automatically be transferred over to Navitus' mail order company called WellDyne Rx. After April 1, you can have refills filled through WellDyne Rx. Any new prescriptions, after April 1, should be sent to WellDyneRx. Please look for the mail order forms on www.ocbenefits.com or through www.navitus.com.

Q Are there any changes to the formulary that we're on? Will my drug change to a different co-pay level?

A No. There will not be any changes on April 1, 2008 from the current BCBS formulary to the Navitus formulary. You should still find that the drugs continue to be on the same levels and co-pays as they were previously through BCBS. Of course for those of you on the three tier plan this formulary will change over time as generics are introduced, drugs move from preferred to non-preferred status, just as the Blue Cross formulary changed from time to time.

Q I have Health Alliance Plan, am I affected by this change?

A No, you will continue to obtain your prescriptions through the HAP prescription drug plan.

Q Why was this change to Navitus made?

A Through Navitus' efficiencies and comprehensive approach to health care, we anticipate significant savings while maintaining benefit levels to employees and retirees. This is part of the County's continuing efforts to control medical costs.

PERSON TO PERSON

L. Brooks Patterson

Since 2001, the Yolklund County Executive Employees Easter Egg Hunt has been an annual ritual celebrating either the end of winter or the arrival of spring – depending on your particular point of view.

Each year, over the past seven, this great family-focused event has grown in participation and popularity. It began as a small token of my appreciation for the great work and dedication of our county employees. On a designated Saturday in March or April, we all got together, with our families, to enjoy one another's company and take part in the many wonderful activities associated with this exciting three hour event.

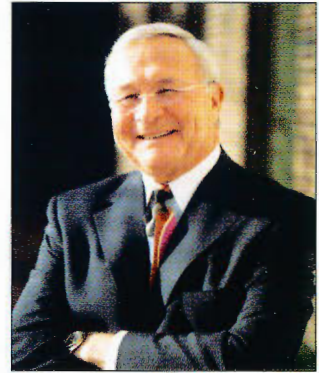
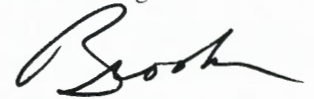
But I'm sorry to have to tell you now that the Easter Egg Hunt will not be held this year. There are a couple of very important reasons for this decision.

After much soul searching, I decided that I could not in good conscience allow the event to continue in light of the current economic conditions confronting this state and region. The event is funded through generous donations from corporate sponsors. With plants closing, people being laid off and home foreclosures rising, I just didn't feel it made sense to ask cash-strapped companies for money to fund what is an internal county event.

I also felt very uneasy about asking our employees to volunteer their time and energy to help organize this event at a time when more is being asked of them because of the hiring freeze and early retirements. This is not the time to ask them to leave their posts. It's not fair to them or their colleagues who would be forced to pick up the slack.

I'd like to publicly, and for the record, thank all our corporate sponsors and our employees for making the Yolklund County Employees Easter Egg Hunt such a successful and memorable event. When the economy turns around, I will certainly consider bringing it back.

Thank you for your understanding.



Get Healthy & Earn Money!

As part of the Wellness Program, Oakland County full-time and part-time eligible for benefit employees will be offered the opportunity to receive a FREE on-site health screening and participate in a health risk assessment survey. (Employees who participated last year are eligible to participate again this year and will receive another \$100 incentive.)

Employees who voluntarily complete BOTH of these activities: (1) OakFit Health Screening AND (2) On-line Health Risk Assessment Survey (through Summit Health) will receive a \$100 incentive which will be added to your paycheck at time of program completion. (The incentive is taxable.)

In an effort to address potential concerns about confidentiality, Oakland County has hired a third party vendor, Summit Health, to conduct both the health screenings and the health risk assessment surveys. It is important to note that individual employee health information gathered as a result of these two activities will NOT be available or maintained by Oakland County. Information will NOT be stored in an employee's personnel file nor will the information be released to our Benefit's Unit.

Individual results will be provided to the employee for their personal health awareness/management purposes only. Individual data will be stored off-site on a secure database maintained by Summit Health. The only individual data the County will receive and track is a list of who participated in these activities. This information will be used to determine who is eligible for the \$100 incentive.

All other reports provided to the County by Summit Health will be provided on an aggregate basis (i.e., reports on County participants as a whole or as part of a demographic group – males, females, etc). The aggregate information will be used to determine where to focus future wellness efforts (e.g., focus on diabetes, encourage greater exercise, etc) and to show whether we are seeing improvement in the general health of our employee population over time such as a reduction of risk behaviors, decrease in the number of employees with high cholesterol, etc.

The Health Screening includes the following tests:

Cholesterol (both fasting and non-fasting offered)

Diabetes

Blood Pressure & Pulse Rate

Body Mass Index (BMI)

We plan to make this as convenient as possible for departments and employees by hosting screenings at worksites where the majority of employees exist. Summit Health, will conduct these CONFIDENTIAL screenings at various times and locations. Multiple nurses will be available at locations where employee registration is high. The estimated time to complete the health screening is approximately 15-20 minutes per employee.

As indicated, employees will need to complete BOTH the health screening AND the Health Risk Assessment survey in order to be eligible for the \$100 incentive. The Health Risk Assessment survey will be available to employees through a link on the OakFit website. The Health Risk Assessment survey MUST be completed on or before, Friday, May 9th in order to be eligible for the incentive. Employees should attend the Health Screening BEFORE going on-line to complete the Health Risk Assessment.

Screenings will be offered throughout the County beginning March 10th and running through May 6th. Visit the OakFit website for location dates and times. http://www.oakgov.com/intranet/wellness/programs/health_screenings08.html

Questions and comments can be directed to Dawn Smith at 248-858-5473 or to smithd@oakgov.com



Dr. Gordon's Granddaughter Wins National Contest

Dr. Thomas Gordon, director of the Department of Health and Human Services, is a proud grandfather. His 8-year old granddaughter, Katherine Gordon, was selected as the winner of a national T-shirt design competition for Talbots Kids clothing stores.

Katherine beat out more than 5,000 others who submitted drawings to Talbots Kids stores across the country this past fall. Kids were asked to enter an animal-themed drawing to be featured on a line of T-shirts for the chain's spring collection.

Katherine's exclusive design features a picture of a dog snuggling with a cat (inspired by her own cat, Scratchy).

10 finalists were picked by Talbots' senior designers and then shoppers voted to choose Katherine as the winner. Dr. Gordon was frequently found walking the halls of the New North Oakland Health facility encouraging votes!

Ten percent of T-shirt sale proceeds will go to the Humane Society of the United States to help less fortunate families pay for veterinary care.

Katherine also won a \$1,000 gift card to Talbots. Way to go!



Katherine's Gordon's design features a picture of a dog snuggling with a cat.

THIS – N – THAT Visit the Farmers Market

The Oakland County Farmers Market, located in the County Market building at 2350 Pontiac Lake Road in Waterford, is opening in May. Visit every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Visit the website at www.oakgov.com/cmarket for market information and download a produce availability guide indicating peak harvest times of Michigan agricultural products.

kudos coming & going

births



New Baby

Melissa Clark, Prosecutor's Office, gave birth to daughter Rhyllie Marie on 11/01/07

Scott Heverly, Pump Maintenance Unit, Drain

Commissioner's Office, and his wife Kristina, had a baby boy, Bryce Marshall on 1/3/07

Mike Baker, Sewer Drain Maintenance Unit, Drain Commissioner's Office, and his wife Leah, celebrated the birth of a daughter, Carly, on 2/15/08

George Miller, Health Division manager, became a grandpa again. Cole David Wisniewski was born January 23, 2008 to George's daughter Jenny and son-in-law Scott. Cole was 8 lbs., 13 ozs. and 20 inches

Kelli Megyesi, Prosecutor's Office, welcomed baby boy Joshua James on 1/17/08

retirements

David Webster, maintenance mechanic II, Water Maintenance Unit, Drain Commissioner's Office, retired 11/30/07 after 28 years of service

Judith Martin, juvenile intake, retired on 01/10/08

Carolyn Bird, M.D., MPH, Health Division, retired on December 21, 2007. Dr. Bird has worked for the Health Division for 25 years.

marriages



Jessie Block, Health Division, married Eric Burkett at Addison Oaks County Park on January 5, 2008

fond farewells

Richard Friedrich, STP operator II, Walled Lake STP Unit, Drain Commissioner's Office, resigned 1/31/08

Bernard Gaulier – chief, Clinical Services – 01/04/08

Jalal Dallo – Court Clerk for Judge Sosnick – 01/04/08

new hires

Katherine Siebenaler was hired as court clerk for Judge Alexander on 12/27/07

Matthew Berard was hired as court clerk for Judge Kumar on 01/22/08

Carolyn Dillard was hired as floating court clerk on 01/07/08

Melissa Moore was hired as youth assistance caseworker I - PTNE (transferred from Community Corrections) on 01/05/08

John Paul Carr was hired as court clerk for Judge Sosnick

Sally Schmidt was hired as floating court clerk on 02/20/08

Mary Eileen Kennedy was hired as student, case management on 02/19/08

Robert McLaughlin was hired as user support specialist I, Data Tech on 02/19/08

Matthew Brown was hired as floating court clerk on 03/03/08

Philip Masters was hired as chemist, Walled Lake STP Unit, Drain Commissioner's Office on 1/29/08

Sean Crottie was hired into the Health Division's Planning and Evaluation Division

Melanie Harbison was hired into the Health Division's Health Education Unit

Regina Branch was hired into the Health Division's Health Education Unit

Marcia Andrews was hired into the Health Division's Personal and Preventive Health unit

Patricia Lewis was hired into the Health Division's Personal and Preventive Health unit

Shayla White was hired into the Health Division's Personal and Preventive Health unit

Nora Maday was hired into the Health Division's Personal and Preventive Health unit

Michael J. Cox was hired into the Health Division's Environmental Health Services

Andraya Sabourin was hired into the Health Division's Environmental Health Services

Annette Tremonti was hired into the Health Division's Environmental Health Services

promotions



Gary Mundy was promoted to sewage treatment supervisor II, Walled Lake STP Unit, Drain Commissioner's Office, 11/24/07

David Sundwall was promoted to GIS/CAD tech II, Drain GIS and

Mapping Services, Drain Commissioner's Office on 9/29/07

Debra Sedam was promoted to ISO & safety coordinator, Administration Unit, Drain Commissioner's Office on 11/24/07

Derek Howard was promoted from court clerk to judicial staff attorney for Judge Alexander on 12/22/07

Kathy Fraser, Health Division, was promoted to a senior public health sanitarian

Thomas E. Vida, Jr., Sheriff's office, was promoted to sergeant on 3/1/08

Megan K. Moore, Sheriff's office, was promoted to forensic laboratory specialist II on 2/16/08

Clay R. Jansson, Sheriff's office, was promoted to lieutenant on 12/22/07

Fred P. Dare, Sheriff's office, was promoted to sergeant on 1/19/08

Stephen Dooley, Sheriff's office, was promoted to sergeant on 1/20/08

Christopher Cole, Sheriff's office, was promoted to sergeant on 1/21/08

celebrations life events

kudos

Lisa Hahn, Health Division, received a Master of Science in Health Education from Eastern Michigan University in August 2007.

Sara Wade, Health Division, received a Master of Science Administration from Central Michigan University on December 15, 2007.

Caitlin Dodge, Health Division, received a Master of Public Administration from the University of Michigan on December 9, 2007.

Meg Seefelt, Health Division, passed her dietetic registration examination on December 15, 2007, making her a registered dietician.

Peg Schmelzer, Health Division passed an exam making her an international board certified lactation consultant.

Rajender Chinthakindi, FM&O, Custodial Unit, became a United States citizen on 2/22/08. Rajender is originally from India.

Barbara Ducharme, Auditing Division, earned the Certified Government Auditing Professional designation on 1/15/08

Congratulations are in order for executive office building intern, Dana Maleszyk. She has been accepted into the Cooley Law School for the fall term. Dana will continue working at the EOB through the summer.

Judge Elizabeth Pezzetti has been appointed chief judge of the Oakland County Probate Court for a term that expires on December 31, 2009

Ronald R. Campbell, the historic preservation architect for Oakland County, has been elected vice-president of the American Institute of Architects(AIA) Michigan

Former County Commissioner Greg Jamian has been appointed to a three year term on the Oakland County Parks & Recreation Commission

Judge Wendy Potts has been reappointed to another two year term as chief judge of the Oakland County Circuit Court

Oakland County Circuit Judge James Alexander has received the "John N. O'Brien Award" from the Oakland County Republican Party for his contributions to the community

Oakland County Circuit Judge John McDonald has received the "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the Oakland County Republican Party for his long history of service to Oakland County

Reaching out to Soldiers in Harms Way

Traditions often start in unassuming ways. On a whim, one Thanksgiving, you and your spouse decide to get away to some warm climate and it becomes an annual ritual. Or you start baking cookies with the grandkids over the holidays using an old passed-down family recipe – and voila a family tradition has been born.

Much the same thing happened to Doris Martin and her family when, two years ago, the Martins' two daughters saw something on the Internet about a soldier's project. They went online (www.soldiers.com) and learned they could request the addresses of soldiers stationed anywhere around the world.

So Doris, who has worked part time for Community Corrections since 1996, decided to turn what the daughters had found on the Internet into a family project. Doris' family chose soldiers doing duty in Iraq and Afghanistan to receive gift packages. This year at Thanksgiving, 17 soldiers were chosen and 38 boxes were sent overseas with four more sent out later on. "People started giving us things to send," Doris said. "So the whole thing just started to grow."

The soldiers were chosen pretty much at random, but many of them are from Michigan including a unit from Ishpeming in the Upper Peninsula.

Doris says on Thanksgiving a very simple meal is prepared and then she and six other members of the family get down to the business of packing the boxes with an array of products ranging from Chapstick to sunblock to handi-wipes to cocoa mix and crackers. Also included in each of the packages is a picture of the Martin family standing with a sign that says "Thank You."

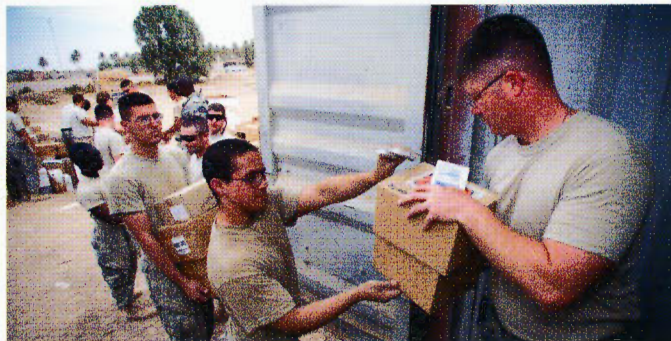
Although there is very little red tape involved in sending out the boxes, Doris admits the process is somewhat time consuming and costly. In fact, it cost her \$349.60 to send those 38 boxes. The family started packing up the boxes at 2:00 p.m. on Thanksgiving day and they still weren't done at 9:00 p.m. when everyone quit for the day. Their oldest daughter had to come back the next day to help finish the job.

At the Post Office, Doris says it takes a clerk about an hour and a half to process all the paperwork and get the packages ready to mail out. "It's just become a family thing," Doris said. "We don't expect any responses. If we do, that's fine. But we do it simply because we want to do it."

A number of the soldiers receiving the boxes have written back. A group calling itself the "107 Females" wrote: "It (the box) was awesome. We loved it. Thank you for thinking about us."

First Lieutenant John S. Roberts replied: "It is much easier to do what we do here knowing we have the support of great Americans like yourselves." And Specialist Basil McCarty writes: "It helps to know that we, as soldiers, are cared for and thought of even though we may not be seen." "We get the satisfaction of knowing we've done something for someone else," Doris explained. "The letters we get back seem so genuine and thankful that they're being thought of and not forgotten."

Doris and her husband, David, who was head of the Print Shop of Oakland County before retiring, live in Waterford.





Behind the Scenes

Sports

Let's Play!

Below is a list of sports teams that County employees voluntarily participate in after work. The leagues and teams on this list are not endorsed, sponsored or promoted by Oakland County. But this list may provide new ideas of ways that employees can promote their own health and fitness outside of work. Since team sports and activities carry some risk of injury and participants assume all risk of injury that might occur, check with your doctor if you have any questions about your ability to participate.

Ladies Golf Leagues

Thursday evenings @ White Lake Oaks

Beginning in May

Tee times beginning at 5:20 pm

16 week season

Strictly a fun league -- non-competitive!

Looking for teams (4-sums) and/or subs

Contact: Debbie Beck at beckd@oakgov.com



Thursday evenings @ Heather Highlands

Beginning in May

Tee times beginning at 5:42 pm

16 week season

Looking for teams and/or subs

Contact: Jennifer Mason at masonj@oakgov.com

Men's Golf Leagues

Tuesday evenings @ Pontiac County Club

Beginning in April

League has been in existence for approx. 50 years

Contact : Mike Pucher at pucherm@oakgov.com



Tuesday evenings @ Springfield Oaks

Tee off around 4:30 pm

Beginning end of April

30+ years

Looking for teams/subs

Contact: Richard McGraw at gem99@yahoo.com

Softball Leagues

Co-ed league

Wednesday evenings here on the County Campus (Center)

Season starts May

Games begin at 6:15 pm

OC employees' softball league has been in existence

for over 35 years and

has had up to 22 teams

from all divisions of

the County, with some

divisions having 2 - 3 teams. Currently have 10

teams comprising of employees from FM & O,

Community Corrections, Health Division, Parks

& Recreation, Drain, Probate Court, Sheriff's

Office, Prosecutor's Office, Animal Control and

Treasurer's Office.

Contact: Kerry Kampsen at

kampsenk@oakgov.com



Organized co-ed league

Been playing for 4 + years

Games played at 11 Mile & I-75 at Huffman

Park, Madison Hgts

Games played at 6:15 pm, 7:30 pm & 8:45 pm

Individuals welcome

Contact: Derek Meinecke at

meinecked@oakgov.com

Hockey Leagues

Thursday nights at the Onyx Arena in Rochester

25 years and older league

League runs September thru March

Games at 9:30 pm and 10:30 pm

http://www.onyxicearena.com/adult_leagues.html

Contact: Edward Joss at josse@oakgov.com



Bowling Leagues

Womens:

Thursday evenings, 300 Bowl, Waterford

Bowling begins at 5:45 pm

33 week season

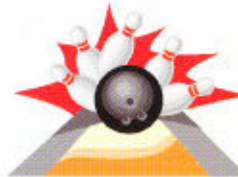
(September - April)

USBC Sanctioned League

Strictly a fun league - - non-competitive!

Teams and/or subs welcome

Contact: Ada Dawson at dawsona@oakgov.com



Men's:

Wednesday evenings, Imperial Lanes, Garfield & Hall Rd (Macomb County)

Bowling begins at 9:30 pm

Season runs August until mid April

3 man teams

Teams welcome

Contact: Kevin Pozsgay at 586-948-2725