



SPOTLIGHT ON KENTWOOD

SPRING 2016

GREETINGS FROM THE MAYOR'S OFFICE!



It's from this room that one can see the American flag blowing briskly in the breeze in front of the Fire Station. A truly wondrous site. The flag is in its full blown glory! The stronger the wind, the more alive the flag becomes. I know many of us are concerned by the breeze created from the U.S. Presidential campaign. No matter your party preference, concern is in the air. I say "concern" knowing quite well that some would use the word "fear". I encourage all to fight the temptation to be manipulated by words that would evoke hatred, anger, or fear. As the American flag is holding up to the mighty west winds coming across Lake Michigan, so must we withstand the temptation to bend under the fear, blowing from the mouths of those, whose words would separate us and not unite us as a people under one flag. May it be our love for one another, no matter what, that resists the negative winds from tearing our flag or our country.

Blessings to you, your family, and your business,

Mayor Kepley

44TH STREET CONSTRUCTION PLANNED FOR JUNE

The City of Kentwood will rehabilitate 44th Street between Broadmoor and Patterson Avenue. The new surface will be constructed of concrete and irrigation will be added to the median islands to help beautify the corridor. Traffic will be maintained with 1 lane in both directions while the construction takes place. Please expect traffic delays and add a little extra time to your commute.

SPRING HAPPENINGS AT THE LIBRARY

KDL Reads! A Community Reading Event: We are reading *Brown Girl Dreaming* by American Book Award winner, Jaqueline Woodson, a powerful poetic memoir of the turbulent 60's through the words of a child. Author visits and special events are scheduled during April and May at all KDL branches.

KDL Reads events at the Kentwood (Richard L. Root) Branch:

- Find Your Voice Teen Poetry Contest: Submit up to three poems during the month of April
- Find Your Voice Teen Poetry Slam: Live and uncensored spoken word competition. Tuesday, May 17, 7:00 PM
- A Live Performance from The Diatribe: A diverse collaborative of spoken word artists. Thursday, April 21 at 7:00 PM
- Stories from Maple Grove: A history of the Kent County Poor Farm. Monday, May 9 at 6:00 PM

Spend an Evening with Tom Rademacher: WKTV is looking to recruit new community reporters for Kentwood and Wyoming. Learn tips on reporting news and human interest stories from a well-regarded local author. Participants are asked to pre-register at news@wktv.org.

KDL is loaning out a "Library of Things". Ask us about borrowing iPads, Launchpads (a preloaded tablet for youth), organic seeds and even bicycles!

Summer Reading Club starts June 6. There will be weekly programs, prizes and gift drawings for all ages, babies to adults. See you at the library!

Please call 784-2007 for information on library programs and services.

FIRST ANNUAL PARKS AND RECREATION GALA FUNDRAISER

The Vibe – A Kentwood Parks & Recreation Gala is the first annual celebration and fundraiser to further enhance the parks and recreation programs and amenities within the community.

The event will be held at The Bluff Banquet and Conference Center on the evening of Friday, May 13, 2016 and will feature the Kentwood adaptive sports program. The fun filled evening will also include dinner, music, silent auction and dancing! For more information and to buy tickets, please visit us online at kentwoodvibe.com

UPCOMING PARKS AND RECREATION EVENTS

Summer Entertainment Series: New for 2016, we are combining the Summer Concert Series and Movies in the Park. The Summer Entertainment Series will be held on Thursday evenings in June through August at the outdoor amphitheatre of the Kentwood Public Library (4950 Breton R.D. SE). We are excited to feature performances by Vox Vidorra, The Crane Wives, The Accidentals, Tailshaker, Bigfoot Buffalo, Delilah DeWylde and the Lost Boys. The events will also include fun family movies and food trucks. There will be something for everyone!

Kentwood Senior Chorale: The community concert will be held at Heritage Baptist Church. This FREE concert is open to the community to enjoy the talent and charm of the Kentwood Senior Chorale. Thursday, May 26 at 7:00pm

Adaptive Track and Field Clinic: Saturday, June 18 at Grand Valley State University in Allendale from 9:00am-3:00pm. Come out and experience the first ever adaptive track and field clinic held in West Michigan! Participants with disabilities will learn about shot put, discus, racing, javelin, and the club throw. Athletes will benefit from track and field coaches, U.S. Paralympic mentors, and recreational therapists. If you would like to volunteer for this exciting event please contact Katelyn Bush at 616-656-5279.

Farmers Market: Saturdays, June 11 through October 8 from 9am to 1pm, located at the Richard L. Root Kent District Library parking lot at 4950 Breton R.D. Join us for another great season! We have a variety of vendors from fresh Michigan produce to bread and granola.

PLAY! – Mobile Recreation: Positive Leadership Activities for Youth (PLAY!) is our new free mobile recreation program. PLAY! offers a variety of fun activities and games. Check out the schedule below to see when we will PLAY! near you. Program runs: June 13 – August 5, Monday – Friday, 11am – 5pm at the following locations: Mondays – Veterans Park 355 48th St., Tuesdays at Northeast Park 1900 Middleground Dr. SE, Wednesdays at Home Acres Park 145 Farnham St. SE, Thursdays at Kelloggwoods Park 245 56th St. SE, Fridays at Pinewood Park 1999 Wolfboro Dr. SE.

REACH: Recreation Education through Alternative Choices for a Healthier life. REACH is a youth summer park program that provides free recreational activities for youth during the summer months at Jaycee Park (1088 Gentain Dr. SE) and Old Farm Park (2350 Embro St. SE). We will have daily activities, games and provide a light snack. REACH is intended to enhance a child's summer recreational and enrichment opportunities to help make their summer memorable. Program runs June 13 – August 5, Monday – Friday, 11am – 5pm.

Community Garden: If you enjoy gardening, but don't have the space to plant; rent a plot from the Kentwood Community Garden! All garden plots are approximately 24'x15'. To participate, please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 616-656-5270.

Splash Pads: Our outdoor Splash Pads feature various water spray units for children to play in! It's a great way to cool off on a hot summer day. Children 8 years old or younger must have adult supervision. Water shoes are highly recommended. The Splash Pads are open Memorial Day through Labor Day, 11am – 8pm weather permitting. Pads are located at Veterans Park (355 48th St. SE) and Pinewood Park (1999 Wolfboro Dr. SE).

Spotlight on Seniors Health EXPO: the event will include 70 vendors, free breakfast and lunch, door prizes, and health screenings. Tuesday, April 26, 2016 from 8:30am-12pm at the Kentwood Activities Center (355-48th St SE)

TRAIL EXTENSION AT THE KENTWOOD ACTIVITY CENTER

The City of Kentwood has received a Community Development Block Grant to add approximately 1,600 feet of new non-motorized trail along the Heyboer Drain from 48th Street to the existing East-West Trail. The new trail will provide enhanced connectivity between the Kentwood Activity Center, Kelloggsville Public Schools and the existing trail network. The trail is expected to be ready for use by early May of 2016.



CITY CLERK'S CORNER

The next election will be held on August 2, 2016 to select the primary candidates for the general election on November 8, 2016. To ensure you are registered and voting in the correct location, please visit www.Michigan.gov/vote to view your polling location prior to an election.

We are in need of additional election workers and encourage you to join our team! This is a paid position. For an Election Worker application please visit the city's website or call the Clerk's Office at 554-0729.

Please also remember to ask door-to-door solicitors if they have a license with the city. They are required to have it with them at all time. If not, please call the Police at the non-emergency number 698-6580 (political and religious solicitors are exempt from obtaining licenses).

POLICE DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

Metro High School Police Academy: High school students who are interested in law enforcement as a career are invited to apply for the Metro High School Police Academy being held June 20-24, 2016. This program provides students with a sampling of the training found at police recruit training schools. It is hosted by the Kentwood, Grand Rapids, Grandville, Walker, Wyoming Police Departments and the Kent County Sheriff Department. Officers from each Department will be the instructors and mentors for the students during the 48 hours of training. Classes will be held at multiple locations throughout the area. Interested students are encouraged to contact Kentwood Police Community Officer Jeff Augustyn at (616) 656-6564 for more information and an application. Application deadline is Friday, May 6, 2016.

Spring Traffic Safety: Spring has arrived early this year and so have the motorcycles and bicycles. We aren't used to seeing them, so let's not forget we need to share the road. Motorcycles and bicycles are easily hidden by other obstacles such as signs and mailboxes. Please look twice before you pull into traffic.

Code Enforcement Top Five: Curious about code enforcement? Here are the top 5 calls received by the department:

1. Weeds/grass or undergrowth more than six (6) inches high
2. Parking violations on non-paved surfaces or on the front lawn
3. Improper storage of RV/equipment-campers, boats, utility trailers, etc. (These items cannot be stored within the front yard area of the residence and should be stored in the side yard or back yard.)
4. Inoperable/junk/unlicensed vehicles
5. Garbage/trash

Help keep our community clean and safe! If you see one of the above violations or any other possible code issues, please contact Mike Leedy at (616) 656-6575 or e-mail him at LeedyM@ci.kentwood.mi.us You can also file a Property Maintenance Complaint on the city's website.

VACATION HOUSE CHECKS

The Volunteers in Police Service program of the Kentwood Police Department offers FREE Vacation House Checks to Kentwood residents. Trained volunteers will perform an inspection of your property while you are away for at least a week and up to 3 months. For more information contact Vicki Highland, Volunteer Coordinator at 656-6571 or email highlandv@ci.kentwood.mi.us

TRAIL PATROL PROGRAM

Do you use the trails 1 or 2 times per week? Help us keep the trails clean and safe by joining the Trail Patrol Program. All members will attend a free training session sponsored by the Kentwood Police and Parks & Recreation Departments. They will receive Trail patrol vests and ID badges. This is not an enforcement position. Patrol members act as friends on the trail. For more information contact Vicki Highland, Volunteer Coordinator at 656-6571 or email highlandv@ci.kentwood.mi.us

STAY INFORMED OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

The City of Kentwood utilizes a free online resource to monitor and map out criminal activity in the City. You can also find out if you have any registered sex offenders in your area. Simply go to www.CrimeReports.com. Once you open the web page, enter your mailing zip code. You can also access this site from the Kentwood Police Department website. Navigate to the "Crime Mapping" page and follow the directions. You can adjust the advanced setting and search your own map section or neighborhood, if you prefer. You can even set it up to provide you with "Crime Alerts" for certain crimes that occur in your neighborhood.

FREE PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISPOSAL

On April 30, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, the Kentwood Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will provide the public another opportunity to prevent drug abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. Bring your medications for disposal to the Kentwood Police Department at 4742 Walma Ave SE, Kentwood. Liquids, needles, inhalers and medical equipment cannot be accepted, only pills and patches. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. For more information contact Vicki Highland at 616-656-6571.

FIRE DEPARTMENT SAFETY TIPS

Spring has arrived and it is time to put away the snow shovels and prepare for barbecues, yard work and spring cleaning. Spring is also a time when we should be alert and pay attention to rapidly changing weather conditions. Severe thunderstorms and tornadoes are possible during this time of the year. Protect your family and home by checking your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Develop and practice a fire escape plan.

In the City of Kentwood, camp fires are allowed but they must be contained in a certified fireplace intended for outdoor use. The fireplace cannot be homemade. Wood is the only product that can be burned, no yard waste, trash or leaves are allowed. Please keep a hose or fire extinguisher near the fire area and do not leave it unattended.

We recommend that you continually monitor the media when a storm is in the area. You should know where to find shelter (ie: basement, interior room or bathroom). It is also wise to have an emergency communication plan with your family members in the case you should become separated during an emergency. You can also assist with emergency response by having visible address numbers on the front of your house.

Let's work together to make this spring and summer a fun and safe season for all!

DIVISION AVE CORRIDOR PLANNING

The City of Kentwood and the City of Wyoming have been working together to improve and beautify the Division Avenue corridor. Portions of the corridor have been repaved, street trees and landscaping have been installed and utilities have been upgraded to ensure the health and safety of those in the corridor. The Division Avenue Business Association has also partnered with the cities to further promote and improve the appearance of the area.

The overall vision for the corridor is to redevelop and restore its retail vitality as well as reestablish residential communities that support the retail trade. This includes making the corridor more walkable by requiring the buildings to be closer to the street, adding a variety of mixed commercial and higher density residential uses and guiding the form and appearance of the buildings which will attract investment and people to live and work along the corridor.

To help facilitate this initiative, the city will soon host a series of public hearings to receive input and discuss the creation of new regulations to assist with the corridor improvement. More information coming soon to the city's website.