

## 2012 Construction Season Underway

As part of the City of Portage fiscal year 2011-12 Capital Improvement Program, several important quality of life projects will be completed during the 2012 construction season.

### Romence Road Reconstruction

#### Constitution Boulevard to South Westnedge Avenue

The project consists of pavement milling and resurfacing this portion of Romence Road, new traffic signs and pavement markings. Sidewalk ramps will also be improved to comply with American With Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The project began in April 2012 and is scheduled to be completed by June 15, 2012.



The project on Romence Road between Constitution Boulevard and South Westnedge Avenue began in April.

### West Centre Avenue Reconstruction

#### Oakland Drive to Shaver Road

The project includes pavement milling and resurfacing this portion of West Centre Avenue, reconstructing manhole castings and minor sewer and water improvements. The project also includes sidewalk improvements to comply with (ADA) standards. Work on this project is scheduled to begin in June 2012 and is expected to be complete by mid-August 2012.



Construction on West Centre Avenue between Oakland Drive and Shaver Road will begin in June.

### Pineview Water Storage Facility Renovation

The Pineview Water Tower, located just off Bacon Avenue, was constructed in 1992 and the original interior and exterior coatings are exhibiting signs of deterioration. The first part of the two-year project consists of the exterior tower repainting, along with minor facility upgrades. The exterior repainting is scheduled to begin in mid-May 2012 and be completed in mid-June 2012. The interior resurfacing of the tower is scheduled in the fiscal year 2013-14 Capital Improvement budget.



The Pineview Water Tower will receive a fresh coat of exterior paint this summer.

### Osterhout Avenue / Oakland Drive Safety Improvements

The project at this intersection consists of the installation of a four-way flashing red beacon (traffic signal) to improve visibility and compliance with the existing four-way stop signs. Minor curb and gutter improvements and pavement markings will also be completed. This project is tentatively scheduled to begin in August 2012.

To enhance the safety of pedestrians, motorists and the contractor workforce, the City of Portage encourages residents and the motoring public to slow down while driving in construction zones. If you have questions about one or more of these construction projects, please contact the Portage Department of Transportation & Utilities at 329-4422.



## On The Web...

The City of Portage, in conjunction with the Portage Human Services Board, has developed a Human Services Information & Referral Resources brochure for Portage organizations, businesses, and residents. The brochure was developed to accomplish two primary objectives:

- ◆ to help organizations direct Portage citizens to the services that can best meet those needs, and
- ◆ to guide Portage citizens seeking assistance to “portals” or mainstream human service providers where information or direct assistance can be obtained.



If you find yourself in a position to help someone in need, but are unsure where to direct them, this brochure should be of assistance to you or your organization. The brochure is available at several locations including City Hall, the Portage Senior Center, the Portage District Library, and the Portage Community Center. The brochure is also available on the City of Portage website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Boards and Commissions > Human Services Board or under Departments > Community Development.

For more information regarding this new resource, please contact the City of Portage Department of Community Development at 269-329-4477.

## Join a Neighborhood Watch Help to Make your Neighborhood a Safe Place

Portage volunteers are presently being sought to participate in local Neighborhood Watch programs. The City of Portage is currently home to thirteen neighborhoods that participate in a Neighborhood Watch program. These areas can be identified by the signs posted along the roadside but are defined by their efforts to prevent crime.

Several dedicated volunteers in each area reach out to their neighbors to make for a safer community through observation, communication and education. The Watch groups have a two-way relationship with the Department of Public Safety, where information is shared to make for a more informed agency and a better prepared community.

### Neighborhood Watch Benefits:

- ◆ Reduced risk of crime
- ◆ Crime information
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Visible postings
- ◆ Enhanced neighborhood network
- ◆ A forum to address neighborhood concerns
- ◆ Direct interaction with members of the Public Safety Department



Members of a Neighborhood Watch become educated in what to look for as well as the crime trends in their area. Residents interested in participating in an existing Neighborhood Watch program – or starting a new one – are encouraged to contact the Portage Department of Public Safety, Police Crime Prevention Officer Kyle Doster at 324-9255. Additional information about Neighborhood Watch programs can be found at [www.usaonwatch.org](http://www.usaonwatch.org).

# Portage Recertified as a *Storm Ready* Community

The City of Portage is one of just a handful of communities in Michigan that have been recognized as *Storm Ready* by the National Weather Service. This recognition demonstrates that the city has taken steps to better protect you by having a comprehensive system in place to monitor developing severe weather and notify residents that a dangerous situation exists. The city first received the *Storm Ready* designation in 2002 and was recently recertified for the second time, following an extensive on-site audit by the National Weather Service.

The Portage Department of Public Safety Communications Center observes local weather conditions 7 days a week, 24 hours a day by monitoring the Law Enforcement Information Network and the National Weather Service Warning Radio. When the systems indicate that

a potential for severe weather exists locally, the Portage community is notified through a system of outdoor emergency warning sirens. When the sirens are sounded, residents are encouraged to seek immediate shelter. The National Weather Service has the ability to interrupt local television programming to alert the public.

The Portage Department of Public Safety encourages all residents to have a safety plan in place. For more information about severe weather and safety plans, visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Plan and Prepare page at [www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/plan/index.shtm) and the National Weather Services (NWS) Weather Safety page at [www.nws.noaa.gov/safety.php](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/safety.php).



## Special Collection Day for Household Hazardous Waste

The Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center will hold a special collection of household hazardous waste products for Portage residents on Saturday, May 19, 2012. The Center, located at 1301 Lamont Street (next to the fairgrounds), will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to collect unwanted hazardous waste free of charge. The following materials are accepted at the Center:

- ◆ Aerosols
- ◆ Batteries
- ◆ Cleaners
- ◆ Computers and monitors
- ◆ TV's and stereos
- ◆ Anti-freeze
- ◆ Gasoline
- ◆ Motor oil
- ◆ Oil-based paint (no latex paint)
- ◆ Pesticides

Other hazardous wastes are also accepted. Please note the Household Hazardous Waste Center is **open year-round and always FREE for Portage residents**. Regular hours are:

- Tuesdays and Fridays: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays: 12 noon to 6 p.m.
- 2nd Saturday of every month: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Call 373-5211, or visit [www.kalcounty.com/hhw](http://www.kalcounty.com/hhw) for more information.



## Spring Cleanup Reminder Program Runs Through May 24

The City of Portage Annual Spring Cleanup Program, which includes the collection of unwanted household items, will run through May 24, 2012. Please place items for disposal at the curb by 7 a.m. on your scheduled pickup date, but not earlier than three days prior to that date. Visit the City of Portage website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Departments > Streets and Equipment > Spring Cleanup to view collection dates and detailed information about the program. Please contact the Portage Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Services at 329-4444 with questions.

## 13th Annual Preservation Gathering Historic District Commission Hosts Historic Preservation Celebration

The Portage Historic District Commission will host a community event in May to celebrate *National Preservation Month*. The 13th Annual Homeowners Gathering will be held at the Portage District Library, 300 Library Lane, on Thursday, May 17 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, although a \$5 donation is suggested.

The Annual Gathering features a keynote speaker, discussion of the Commission's recent efforts of the past year and an opportunity for the public, commissioners, district homeowners and officials to come together to remind that historic properties contribute toward making Portage a distinctive community.

For more information please visit the City of Portage website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Boards and Commissions > Historic District Commission or call 329-4400.



## Recreational Fire Permits Required in the City of Portage

The Portage Department of Public Safety – Fire Division reminds residents that recreational fires may be kindled only if a fire pit permit has been obtained. To receive a permit, contact the Fire Division at 329-4487 or visit the administrative offices (7830 Shaver Road), 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Original permits (valid for two years) will be issued to property owners only after an inspection of the site of



the proposed fire pit is completed by the Fire Division. A renewal after two years may be granted without a re-inspection if no complaints have been

received by the Fire Division during the previous permit period. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to contact the Fire Division to apply for a renewal if one is desired. The current fee for a Recreational Fire Permit inspection is \$20, as established by the City Council. The permit renewal fee is \$5. A permit is not required for a commercial outdoor fireplace or similar device; however the rules and regulations for recreational fires must still be followed.

### Fire Pits

All recreational fires must be kindled in an approved fire pit as described below:

- ◆ Fire pits must be at least 50 feet from all structures (per City ordinance) and should be 25 feet from property lines, if possible.
- ◆ Fire pits must have a diameter of no greater than three feet.

- ◆ The fire pit must be lined with a non-combustible material such as brick or rock and must have bare earth inside the liner.
- ◆ Fire pits cannot be built under low-hanging branches, overhead wires, or other combustible materials.

### Rules and Regulations for Recreational Fires

- ◆ A recreational fire shall be constantly attended by a competent adult of 18 years or older until such fire is extinguished.
- ◆ A garden hose connected to a water supply must be readily available any time a fire is kindled, in addition to any other fire extinguishing equipment that may be present.
- ◆ Materials to be burned must be in a pile no larger than 3 feet in diameter and 2 feet tall.
- ◆ No fire may be kindled when the wind speed is 10 mph or greater. If wind speed increases in excess of 10 mph the fire must immediately be extinguished.
- ◆ All fires must be extinguished prior to midnight.
- ◆ Fires are for recreational or cooking purposes only. Burning of leaves, brush, other yard waste or construction waste is expressly prohibited.
- ◆ The permit holder will be responsible for the abatement of conditions that cause complaints from others. This includes heavy smoke, noxious odors, floating debris, etc.

Violations of the rules and regulations can cause the fire to be extinguished and the possible issuance of a civil citation for a violation of the adopted fire code.

For questions regarding this or other information about fire services call 329-4487 or visit [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Departments > Public Safety > Fire Division.

# Portage Summer Entertainment Series Heats Up

Summer is almost here, and that means it's time to come out and enjoy the many wonderful activities the Summer Entertainment Series (SES) has planned to make your summer sizzle with excitement. Highlights included the return of the delicious **Taste of Portage** on Saturday, June 23, featuring **Al's Basement Band** and the popular Beatles tribute band **Shout**.



The World Famous **Glenn Miller Orchestra** will turn up the heat at the Overlander Bandshell on Sunday, July 29. This legendary band had more hit records in one year than anybody in the history of the recording industry.

As summer breezes by, be sure to take in the two SES theatrical offerings:

- ◆ Shakespeare in the Park will present **The Tempest**. Filled with magic and mischief, *The Tempest* is widely considered to be one of Shakespeare's greatest works. Auditions will be held May 20 and 21 at 7 p.m. in the Grain Elevator at Celery Flats and all ages are encouraged to audition. Performances are July 20-28.
- ◆ The **Break-a-Leg Players** (a theatrical opportunity for children entering the second grade through high school), will present **Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs** August 3-5. Auditions will be held July 10 and 11 at the Hayloft Theatre.

The 2012 SES season will also feature the Kids Kickoff, Lunch & Learn, Outdoor Movie Nights, Amphitheatre concerts and Teas at historic Stuart Manor (see article at right).

To see a complete listing of SES programming, sign up to receive event e-mail reminders or to purchase tickets, contact the Portage Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Services at 329-4522 or click on the SES button at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov).

While online, be sure to become a fan of the Summer Entertainment Series on Facebook.



# Family Fishing Fair

Saturday, May 19, 2012 – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Join us at Ramona Park for the 3rd annual **Family Fishing Fair** on May 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This free community event will offer various activities for all ages and abilities, so bring the whole family and experience all the joys and lifetime benefits associated with fishing, boating and aquatic conservation. Whether this is your first time or you are a fair weather fishing fan, the Family Fishing Fair is sure to bring smiles and good times! Fishing equipment loaners will be on hand for those hoping to reel in their first (or next) catch of the day – no experience necessary as local fishing guides and experts will be on-site to provide all the guidance you need.



100 Kids will receive their own fishing rod courtesy of United Water!



Numerous fun activities will be offered, including these and many more:

- ◆ Kids Casting contest
- ◆ Knot Tying lessons
- ◆ Pond life discovery
- ◆ Safe boating and trip preparation
- ◆ Rigging your rod
- ◆ Casting instruction
- ◆ Make n Take sailboat races
- ◆ Shoreline and dockside fishing
- ◆ Garlic Mustard Pull
- ◆ Try out a kayak or improve your paddling skills with tips from Lee's experts!

For more information or to volunteer for this event, contact the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Services at 329-4522 or visit [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov).

# Spring Teas at Historic Stuart Manor

Enjoy the high quality of service, a relaxing atmosphere and memorable moments with family and friends as only teas at Stuart Manor can provide.



the seas as renowned photographer Chuck Bentley shares his photographs and brings to life the sights, sounds and beauty of China.

## **"History of the Blues" by John Speeter** Wednesday, June 20, 12 Noon

John's program is both a performance and a narrative tracing the Blues through the songs of several well know masters of the genre. A both informative and entertaining event. Continue your tea experience by attending a special showing of *Oh Brother Where Art Thou?* on Thursday, June 21 at 6:30 p.m. at the Portage District Library. The movie and popcorn are free.

## **A Glimpse of Teas to Come!**

Jubilee Celebrations: Queen Victoria – Queen Elizabeth II  
~ Saturday, July 14, 1 p.m.

Literary Humor: A Fresh Splash of Quirky by Elaine Seaman  
~ Wednesday, July 18, 12 Noon

Glenn Miller Orchestra (All Tickets \$40)  
~ Sunday, July 29, 4:30 p.m.

The Titanic: 100 Year Anniversary Voyage  
~ Wednesday, August 1, 12 Noon

Snow White Princess Tea, Saturday (Adults \$27; Youth \$20)  
~ August 4, 5:30 p.m.

Edible Herbs and Flowers  
~ Saturday, August 11, 1 p.m.

The cost for most teas is \$22 for adults and \$15 for youth 5-12, unless stated otherwise. This includes a four-course tea, tax and gratuity. Pre-paid reservations are required as seating is limited. To reserve a table, call the Portage Parks & Recreation Department at 329-4522 or purchase your tickets online at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov).

## **Celebration of Mothers – and all the Special Women in Your Life**

Saturday, May 12, 1 p.m.

You are invited to a not-to-be-missed culinary event. The Lure of Chocolate! Chocolate transfers are all the rage and they have come to Portage! Come indulge all your senses as Chocolatier Lori Brown brings her favorite chocolate recipes to center stage. You will go home with recipes and inspirations, like no other! Is there anything better than sharing fabulous chocolate?

## **A Look at Classic Mysteries and Foreshadowing of Classics to Come**

Wednesday, June 6, 12 Noon

Join retired WMU English professor Beth Amidon to discuss a new look at classic mysteries from Bronte to Neffenger. You will have an opportunity to appreciate the mysterious qualities of beloved classics and how they have been interwoven into modern mysteries. Continue your tea experience by attending a special presentation of *Rebecca* at the Portage District Library on Thursday, June 7 at 6:30 p.m. The movie and popcorn are free.

## **China in Picture and Story**

Saturday, June 16, 1 p.m.

No climbing the Great Wall required to experience one of the oldest cultures steeped in tradition. Travel across

# Recycled Art in the Park Contest

The City of Portage Park Board will sponsor the first annual **Recycled Art in the Park** contest this fall to promote recycling in the City of Portage. The contest will be a venue for artists to express their creativity and create public awareness about recycling. Entries will be displayed outdoors at the Celery Flats Historical Area. Public voting and judging will be conducted, with prizes awarded in a variety of categories, including a *Popular Choice* based on visitor voting.

Individuals, organizations, K-12 school groups, colleges and universities are all eligible to participate, with a limit of one entry per person or organization. Artwork must contain 100% recycled materials (except for bonding devices such as screws, nuts and bolts, welding, glue and other fastening materials) and fit into a 10' x 10' designated space. Registration will take place in July, with a limit of 20 entrants being accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Public viewing and panel judging will be held on September 29, 2012 and winners will be announced on Saturday, October 6, 2012.

For complete contest rules, registration deadlines and other details, please visit [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Boards and Commissions > Park Board after May 15, 2012.

# Local Artwork at City Hall

Visitors to Portage City Hall can enjoy artwork produced by local artists or view art collections on loan from local art patrons. Information about the artist is available with each exhibit and many works featured are for sale. The collections are rotated on a bi-monthly basis, with display openings starting in September 2012. Artists with a Portage connection interested in displaying their works at Portage City Hall can call the Office of the City Manager at 329-4400.

# Portage Collaborative Posts First in a Series of Video Segments

The City of Portage, the Portage District Library and Portage Public Schools continue a collaborative marketing effort to promote their services to residents and businesses, in addition to presenting a unified message to attract new families and business. This initiative helps to position Portage as a place that communicates with one voice and projects a cooperative spirit. As an example, the first in a series of video segments on the virtues of Portage, a video that discusses job creation and training programs initiated by the City of Portage, Portage Public Schools and Portage District Library, can be seen at [portagecollaboration.wordpress.com](http://portagecollaboration.wordpress.com).



Scan this QR Code to view to the *We Get It!* video segment.

## Friendly Reminders

As the growing season approaches, the City of Portage reminds residents of the importance of property maintenance activities.

### Keep Grass and Weeds Mowed

Please take time to properly maintain your property by controlling weeds and keeping lawns mowed on a regular basis. Growth in excess of eight inches is prohibited.



### Keep Sidewalks Clear of Debris

Property owners and occupants with sidewalks adjacent to their properties are reminded to keep sidewalks clear. The sidewalk must be free of debris and rubbish including broken bottles and glass, sand, gravel and obstructions such as overhanging branches, brush or other articles.

### Perform Needed Maintenance Projects

Spring is a great time to tackle those important maintenance projects such as painting, window repairs, gutter maintenance and roof repairs.

Desirable, high-quality neighborhoods are key to Portage remaining *A Place for Opportunities to Grow!* To view the complete City of Portage Code of Ordinances and learn more about these and other community quality matters, visit the *Quick Links* section of the city website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov).

For more information, or to report a community quality concern, please contact the Department of Community Development at 329-4477 or use the on-line *Report It!* tool on the city website.

## Office of the City Clerk to Mail New Voter ID Cards

As a result of the 2010 Census and changing Kalamazoo County Commission Districts (the Kalamazoo County Commission is being reduced from 17 to 11 members), the Office of the City Clerk will mail new voter identification cards to each registered voter in the City of Portage. The new cards will be mailed to voters in May. Voters are encouraged to review the new voter identification card and note the polling location, as some changes have occurred.

Voters are not required to produce this voter identification card when voting – it is simply an informational card designed to provide details related to a voter's polling location, precinct number and State House, Senate, School and U.S. Congressional districts.

For more information about elections please contact the Portage Office of the City Clerk at 329-4511 or visit [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Departments > City Clerk. Additional information about voting and elections is available at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).



CITY OF **PORTAGE**  
*A Place for Opportunities to Grow*  
7900 South Westnedge Avenue  
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160

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## City Hall Closings

Non-emergency city offices will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

### Memorial Day

Monday, May 28, 2012

### Independence Day

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

## Portage City Council

Portage City Council meetings are held on Tuesday evenings at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) in Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. and are open to the public.

The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city. Citizens are encouraged to contact the City Administration with concerns or complaints about city services by calling Complaint Resolution at (269) 329-4404 or by using visiting [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Report It!



**Mayor Peter J. Strazdas**  
327-4478  
[peter.strazdas@portagemi.gov](mailto:peter.strazdas@portagemi.gov)



**Mayor Pro Tem Claudette Reid**  
491-9725  
[claudette.reid@portagemi.gov](mailto:claudette.reid@portagemi.gov)



**Elizabeth Campbell**  
321-9383  
[campbell4portage@yahoo.com](mailto:campbell4portage@yahoo.com)



**Jim Pearson**  
327-9136  
[jimpearson4@gmail.com](mailto:jimpearson4@gmail.com)



**Patricia M. Randall**  
324-7779  
[patricia.randall@portagemi.gov](mailto:patricia.randall@portagemi.gov)



**Ed Sackley**  
323-8119  
[edsackley@msn.com](mailto:edsackley@msn.com)



**Terry R. Urban**  
323-8160  
[terry.urban@portagemi.gov](mailto:terry.urban@portagemi.gov)

**City Manager:**  
Maurice S. Evans  
[evansm@portagemi.gov](mailto:evansm@portagemi.gov)

**Portager Editor:**  
Mary Beth Block  
[blockm@portagemi.gov](mailto:blockm@portagemi.gov)

## Televised City Meetings

All City of Portage City Council, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings can be viewed live on channel 21. AT&T U-Verse customers can access the City of Portage government meetings on channel 99 and then follow the prompts to access the various meetings.

### May

3	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
8	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting
14	7:00 p.m.	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
17	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
22	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting

### June

7	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
11	7:30 p.m.	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
12	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
21	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
26	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting