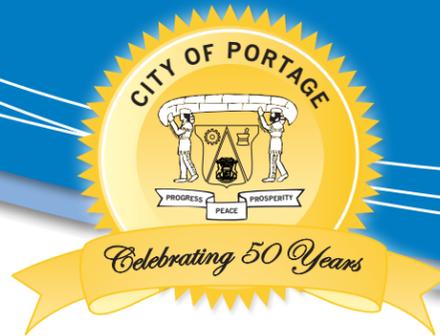


# Portager

May 2013



7900 South Westnedge Avenue  
Portage, Michigan 49002  
www.portagemi.gov



## Celebrate the City of Portage 50th Anniversary with the Summer Entertainment Series!

This summer, celebrate with the Summer Entertainment Series (SES) as Portage marks 50 years as a city. A special **Taste of Portage** – **FREE** this year in honor of the anniversary – will be held on **Saturday, June 22 from 4:30 to 9 p.m.** Great food, amazing entertainment and a day surrounded by friends and family – the Taste of Portage has it all and promises to be extra special this year. With the help of WRKR, the entertainment lineup includes the music of local act Al's Basement Band at 5 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m., the funk-soul-groove music of the popular Kalamazoo-based band Funktion. This special Taste of Portage is made possible through the generosity of the Hinman Company, and with support from partner sponsors, Chemical Bank, Pfizer, Sanford Financial Services and Meyer C. Weiner Company.

Continuing the celebration, **Your Generation in Concert** featuring Fifty Amp Fuse, will perform at the Overlander Bandshell on **Saturday, July 13 at 7:30 p.m.** Celebrating six decades of American and British pop/rock hits, this band wows audiences with a multimedia spectacular. Program sponsors are Keystone Bank and United Water NACO.

Summer theatre is always enjoyed, whether outdoors at the Celery Flats Amphitheatre or indoors at the Hayloft Theatre. This summer, Shakespeare in the Park will present **The Comedy of Errors** from **July 18 - 21**. This is Shakespeare's shortest play and one of his more farcical comedies. Auditions will be held May 19 and 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the Grain Elevator at Celery Flats and all ages are encouraged to audition. The Break-a-Leg Players (a



theatrical opportunity for children entering the second grade through high school), will present **Rapunzel** from **August 2 - 4**. Auditions will be held July 8 and 9 at the Hayloft Theatre.

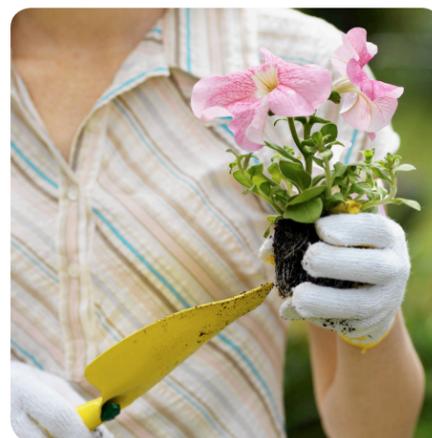
To see a complete listing of SES programming, sign up to receive event email reminders and purchase tickets, go to **www.portagemi.gov** and click on the SES icon or contact the Portage Parks and Recreation Division at 329-4522.

## Annual Water Quality Report Available Online

The City of Portage 2013 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report is available online. The report contains important information about the source and quality of the municipal water supplied to Portage water system customers.

Visit [www.portagemi.gov/FilesCustom/HtmlEditor/files/Transportation/Utilities/WaterQualityReport.pdf](http://www.portagemi.gov/FilesCustom/HtmlEditor/files/Transportation/Utilities/WaterQualityReport.pdf) to view and / or print the 2013 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. Questions about the report may be directed to the Department of Transportation & Utilities at 329-4422.

## City Centre Flower Planting Volunteers Needed!



During the summer months the Portage City Centre is transformed into a showcase of colorful floral displays that grace and beautify the area. Show your community spirit by helping to plant the annual flowers in the City Centre.

Volunteers are needed to plant flowers on **Friday, May 17 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** In cooperation with *Kalamazoo In Bloom*, the city hopes for a large turnout so that a dazzling display will be in place prior to the Memorial Day weekend. Each volunteer will receive pizza and soft drinks at noon. Volunteers are asked to bring gloves and a hand-trowel, but don't worry, plenty of each will be available for those without.

Planting Day is an excellent opportunity to become part of the quality-of-life enhancements that help make Portage a special place for residents and visitors. Although drop-in participants are welcome, if you plan on attending please contact the Parks & Recreation Division at 329-4522 in advance to aid planning efforts.

## Home Improvement Funds Available

As warmer weather approaches, property owners may be considering interior and exterior home improvement projects. The following home improvement programs are available to income-eligible property owners of owner-occupied homes in the City of Portage:



◆ **Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Up to \$10,000 via no-interest or low-interest loans for a variety of home repairs, including: furnace repair and replacement, roofing repair and replacement, accessibility improvements, sewer and water connections, plumbing upgrades, electrical upgrades and other necessary interior and exterior repairs.

◆ **Emergency Repair Grant Program:** Up to \$1,000 to complete household repairs that pose an immediate threat to the health, safety and welfare of the residents. The City of Portage is prepared to quickly assist homeowners who have an emergency situation.

Eligibility for all programs is based on maximum income limits established annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and are shown in the table below.

Household Size	Maximum Income Limit to Qualify for a Deferred 0% Interest Loan	Maximum Income Limit to Qualify for a Deferred 3% Interest Loan*
1 Person	\$13,100	\$34,900
2 Person	\$15,000	\$39,900
3 Person	\$16,850	\$44,900
4 Person	\$18,700	\$49,850
5 Person	\$20,200	\$53,850
6 Person	\$21,700	\$57,850
7 Person	\$23,200	\$61,850
8 Person	\$24,700	\$65,850

\* No interest Deferred Matching Loans also available for every dollar the homeowner contributes toward rehabilitation costs.

To obtain more information, or to request an application for one of these City of Portage Housing Assistance Programs, please call the City of Portage Department of Community Development at 329-4477. Funding is limited, so call today!

# Are You Ready for Severe Weather?

Springtime in Michigan usually means warming temperatures and spring flowers but also brings with it the threat of severe weather. The Portage Department of Public Safety urges residents to be prepared for severe weather.

## Before the Storm

Preparation for weather disasters is key to protecting your family during severe weather. Here is what you can do to be prepared:

- ◆ Build a Disaster Supply Kit (visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to learn how) and ensure that all family members know the location of the kit. Consider building kits for vehicles as well.
- ◆ Determine the designated "safe" room (basement, interior room/hall, bathroom, closet, etc).
- ◆ Decide what family members will do if you are not together when a disaster strikes. Do you know how you will get to a safe place; how you will contact one another; how you will get back together? Consider appointing an "out of town" contact who family members can notify that they are safe and who can relay important information to other family members.
- ◆ Know how you will be warned of impending severe weather. Sources include NOAA Weather Radio, TV and radio news broadcasts, the Emergency Alert System on radio and TV programs, Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and outdoor sirens (see related article).

WEA is a public safety system that allows customers who own certain wireless phone models and other enabled mobile devices to receive geographically-targeted text messages alerting them of imminent threats to safety in their area. Visit [www.fcc.gov/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea](http://www.fcc.gov/guides/wireless-emergency-alerts-wea) for more information.

- ◆ Once the preparation is complete, practice your plan. Sound a "siren" and practice getting to the "safe" room quickly. Test the batteries in your NOAA radio. The National Weather Service suggests changing the batteries in the spring and fall when Daylight Savings Time begins and ends.
- ◆ When severe weather is forecasted, keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of light or increasing wind and listen for the sound of thunder. Keep your NOAA radio nearby.

## During the Storm

When you are alerted to impending severe weather, put your plan into action and monitor the various sources of weather information.



### During a Thunderstorm:

- ◆ Follow the *30/30 Lightning Safety Rule*: If after seeing lightning, if you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder, go indoors. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.
- ◆ Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- ◆ Unplug any electronic equipment well before a storm arrives.
- ◆ If outdoors, try to get inside a building or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes the car, you are much safer inside

a vehicle than outside. Rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection to those not touching metal.

## During a Tornado:

- ◆ If in a home or building, move to the designated "safe" room and stay away from windows.
- ◆ Mobile homes, even if anchored, offer little protection from tornadoes. Drive to a sturdy nearby building or a storm shelter.
- ◆ If you see flying debris while driving, pull over and park. Stay in the car with the seat belt on, put your head below the windows and cover your head with your hands and a blanket if possible. If you can get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit the car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.



## After the Storm

After the storm passes, prevent injury by taking these precautionary steps:

- ◆ Continue to monitor your NOAA radio or television for the latest information. As in any emergency, follow the instructions given by local emergency management officials.
- ◆ Never drive through a flooded roadway.
- ◆ Be careful when entering any structure that has been damaged. Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves and gloves when handling or walking on or near debris. Be aware of hazards from exposed nails and broken glass.
- ◆ Stay away from downed power lines or objects in contact with downed lines. Report electrical hazards to the police and the utility company.
- ◆ Use battery-powered lanterns, if possible, rather than candles to light homes without electrical power. If candles must be used, use sturdy candle holders and keep them away from curtains, paper, wood or other flammable items. Never leave a candle burning when out of the room.
- ◆ Do not use generators, grills, camp stoves or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, basement, garage or camper - even outside near an open window, door or vent. Carbon monoxide (CO) from these sources can build up and poison the people and animals inside.

## Portage Outdoor Warning System

The City of Portage maintains a system of outdoor warning sirens, which provide notification in the event of a weather emergency. It is important to note that the outdoor warning system is designed to warn citizens while they are **outdoors**. The sirens are not designed to wake residents from sleep or be heard over other home activities – a NOAA weather radio is important to have for just this reason. In Portage, the sirens are sounded when a tornado warning has been issued, winds exceed 70 mph or large hail is present. If you hear the outdoor warning sirens, go indoors immediately and monitor local media reports for further information. In the City of Portage, the outdoor warning sirens are tested on the first Saturday of each month at 1 p.m.

# Recreational Campfire Permitting and Regulations

With spring weather finally arriving, many Portage families will head outdoors to enjoy an evening by a campfire. The Portage Fire Division reminds citizens that a residential campfire permit is required before kindling a recreational campfire. To obtain a recreational campfire permit, property owners must complete an application and request an inspection of the proposed location and campfire pit by Portage Firefighters. Once issued, permits are valid for two years and may be renewed without a re-inspection if no complaints were filed during the previous permit period.



## Fire Pit Construction:

All recreational campfires must be in an approved fire pit as described below. (A permit is not required for a commercial outdoor fireplace or similar device; however, *Recreational Campfire Regulations* must still be followed.) Campfire pits:

- ◆ must be at least 25 feet from structures and property lines,
- ◆ must have a diameter no greater than three feet,
- ◆ must be lined with non-combustible material, such as brick or rock, and must have bare earth inside the liner and
- ◆ cannot be built under low-hanging branches, wires, or other combustible materials.

## Recreational Campfire Regulations:

- ◆ A recreational campfire shall be constantly attended by an adult until the campfire is extinguished.
- ◆ A garden hose connected to a water supply must be readily accessible every time a campfire is kindled.
- ◆ A campfire may NOT be kindled when the wind speed is 10 mph or greater. Additionally, if wind speed increases to in excess of 10 mph after a campfire has been kindled, the campfire must immediately be extinguished.
- ◆ Campfires must be extinguished prior to midnight.
- ◆ Campfires may ONLY be used for recreational and cooking purposes. Burning of leaves, brush, 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 *Recreational Campfire Regulations* may cause the Portage Fire Division to extinguish the campfire and potentially issue a civil citation for a violation of the adopted fire code.

To apply for or renew a campfire permit, please contact the Portage Fire Division at 329-4487 or visit Fire Station #1, 7830 Shaver Road, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The current fee for a new recreational campfire permit and inspection is \$20 and \$5 for a renewal permit.

# Parks and Recreation Summer Programs Kick Off in May with Pair of Events at Ramona Park

The Portage Parks & Recreation Division offers year-round seasonal recreation opportunities. The 2013 Summer Programs guide is included with this edition of the *Portager* and offers details about programs offered this year. Programming includes several summer youth camps: School of Fish day camps, Kingdom skateboarding camps, YMCA youth tennis camps, Portage Public Schools volleyball and basketball camps, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club bike camp and Kalamazoo Kids on Stage. Two exciting programs, sponsored by the Take Me Fishing Initiative and the National Recreation and Parks Association, will kick off the recreation season this month.



## Family Fishing Fair Saturday, May 18, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Special guest and 2012 B.A.S.S. Elite Series Champion, Jonathon VanDam, will provide fishing tips and sign autographs at the 4th annual Family Fishing Fair! This **FREE** community event offers various activities for all ages and abilities, so bring the whole family out to Ramona Park to

experience 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 needed. Activities include lure making, knot tying, fly casting, rod rigging, CPR instruction and much more!

For more information or to volunteer for this event, contact the Parks and Recreation Division at 329-4522.

### Event partners and activities provided by:

- ◆ Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery
- ◆ Michigan DNR
- ◆ Lee's Adventure Sports
- ◆ D & R Sports Center
- ◆ Grandpa Jim's Fishing Adventure
- ◆ Trout Unlimited
- ◆ Portage Environmental Board
- ◆ Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office
- ◆ Kalamazoo Nature Center
- ◆ Portage Firefighters Union
- ◆ Kal-Valley Bass Club
- ◆ Kalamazoo Sail & Power Squadron
- ◆ Flygirls
- ◆ Portage Youth Advisory Committee

## Mother's Day Outdoor Adventure Saturday, May 11, 12 noon to 4 p.m.



Celebrate Mothers Day weekend connecting with mom and nature at Ramona Park. Let the experts teach you and your mom how to fish, craft your own lures, paddle a kayak or paddle board and learn tandem yoga all free of charge! Each mom will go home with a unique gift and new memories of this special day spent with her loved ones!

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



Free trees for planting courtesy of the National Wildlife Federation (Trees are young trees 16-24" tall Northern Red Oak, Sugar Maple and Shagbark Hickory.)

Grand Prize – a Lake Michigan Fishing Charter, plus many more prizes and gifts!



## Saturday, May 4 - 11, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Celery Flats Historical Area

To promote recycling in the City of Portage, this month, the Portage Park Board will hold the inaugural *Recycled Art in the Park* contest. Artwork entries must use 100% recycled materials and will be displayed outdoors as part of a "sculpture walk" at the Celery Flats Historical area from May 4 - 11. The opening ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 4 from 1 to 4 p.m. at Celery Flats, where residents can view the artwork, enjoy recycled craft activities for kids, renovated cars using recycled items, food and music to celebrate recycling and a greener community in southwest Michigan!

The sculpture walk will feature artwork from 14 area artists. A panel of judges will determine the first, second and third place winners as well as a Sponsor's Choice Award. The week-long public voting will determine the additional Patron's Choice Award. Winners will be announced on Saturday, May 11.

## Mini Senior Expo at the Portage Senior Center

The Portage Senior Center (PSC) will host a two-hour *Bits of Business* Mini Senior Expo on **Thursday, May 9** from **9 to 11 a.m.** Representatives from 20 local businesses and organizations with products or services of interest to mature adults will be on hand with displays, literature and information. Visit the PSC to learn about vendor offerings that range from footwear to chair massage, hearing services, senior housing options, ambulance & emergency services, health & human services and much more. This event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served and don't miss the door prizes! The Portage Senior Center is located at 320 Library Lane. For more information, please call 329-4555

## Portage Historic District Commission Hosts 14th Annual Preservation Gathering

The Portage Historic District Commission will host a community event in May to celebrate the City of Portage 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and in recognition of National Preservation Month. The *14<sup>th</sup> Annual Homeowners Gathering* will be held at Stuart Manor, 7340 Garden Lane in the Celery Flats Historical Area, on **Thursday, May 30** from **6:30 to 8 p.m.** The event is free and open to the public, although donations are suggested.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Homeowners Gathering will have the unique 50<sup>th</sup> city anniversary focus and feature the Portage District Library's Local Historian, Steve Rossio as the keynote speaker. The presentation of the annual HDC award for exemplary efforts in Portage history or preservation will also be presented. This year's winner is Katie VanLonkhuyzen, a historic homeowner and member of the HDC. Light refreshments will be served.

This annual event is an opportunity for area citizens, commissioners, district property owners and local officials to come together to recognize the historic properties that make Portage a distinctive community. For more information please visit the City of Portage website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Boards & Commissions > Historic District Commission or call 329-4400.

### 50th Anniversary Pop Quiz

Q: Can you name the only female Mayor of the City of Portage?

A: Betty Lee Ongley served as a City Councilmember from 1968 to 1973, when she was elected Mayor. She served three terms as Mayor, until 1979, and returned to the Council for one term in 2003. Mrs. Ongley, who has contributed to the betterment of the Portage community in countless ways, continues to serve as the Portage District Library Board Chairperson.



# Community Quality Reminders



Desirable, high-quality neighborhoods are key to Portage remaining a *Natural Place to Move!* As the growing season quickly 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.

To view the 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 online *Report It!* tool on the city website.

# Spring Cleanup Program Continues through May 23

Each spring, the City of Portage conducts the Spring Cleanup Program, giving residents the opportunity to reduce household clutter and get rid of unwanted household materials by placing them at curbside for pickup. The 2013 program, which began on April 22, will continue through May 23. The March 2013 edition of the *Portager* contained program details and a neighborhood collection map. Visit the city website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) and click on the Spring Cleanup Program icon to view details and collection dates.



Neighborhood collection occurs only once during the Spring Cleanup Program, so it is important to place items at the curb by 7 a.m. on your scheduled pickup date! **Materials may be placed at curbside up to 72 hours prior to your scheduled pickup date.**

The Spring Cleanup Program is only performed at residential properties on public streets. The program does not take place along private drives, at apartment complexes, churches, businesses or manufactured home communities.

If you have any questions about the scheduled pickup date for your neighborhood, or need information regarding materials and preparation for the program, please call the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Public Services at 329-4444.

## Find some old household chemicals while spring cleaning?

The Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Center accepts household chemicals and electronics. The center, located at 1301 Lamont Street in Kalamazoo (next to the fairgrounds), is **open year-round and is FREE for Portage residents.**

**Regular hours:** Tuesday & Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Wednesday – 12 noon to 6 p.m. and every second Saturday of the month – 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

### The following materials are accepted at the Center:

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

Other hazardous wastes are also accepted. For more information, please call the HHW information hotline at 373-5211, or go online at [www.kalcounty.com/hhw](http://www.kalcounty.com/hhw).



7900 South Westnedge Avenue  
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

PSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
KALAMAZOO, MI  
PERMIT NO.33



## City Closings

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

### Memorial Day

Monday, May 27

### Independence Day

Thursday, July 4

The next edition of the *Portager* will be published in June 2013.

## 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 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 98. 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

2	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
13	7:00 p.m.	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
14	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting
16	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
28	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting

### June

6	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
10	7:00 p.m.	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
11	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting
20	7:00 p.m.	Planning Commission Meeting
25	7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting