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Message from Mark



I'd like to begin this message by welcoming [Andrew S. McKinnon](#) as the new director of the Macomb County Department of Human Resources and Labor Relations. Andy started at the beginning of this week and we are confident that he will be a strong leader that brings creativity and passion to the HR director role.

Now, this summer has been filled with wonderful events and community gatherings that celebrated Macomb County, its unique heritage and its fantastic natural resources. For instance,

on June 16th, we held the 7th annual Sprint and Splash at Lake St. Clair Metropark. During this event, more than 300 participants ran, walked, paddled and helped us raise funds for two very important organizations - the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Foundation and the Clinton River Watershed Council.

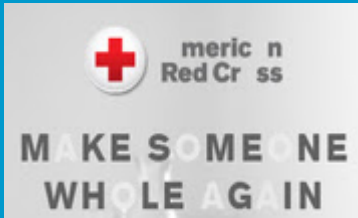
June also saw the 29th year of the Macomb Community Action Senior Fun Fest at Jimmy John's Field and the arrival of the 2018 FLW Tour on Lake St. Clair – which highlighted our beautiful waterways. It also brought attention to our outstanding fisheries. As Chad Grigsby, a top angler and five-time Forrest Wood Cup qualifier said: "I'm at a loss for words on how good the lake's fishing is." The neighboring Bass, Brews and BBQ Festival gave our guests a chance to sample local food vendors and listen to area bands. They joined us in celebrating our lake.

All told, it was an incredible month, capped off by one of the most special events I have ever had the privilege to be a part of here in Macomb County – the Bicentennial Torch Relay. The event featured more than 200 runners traveling 200 miles in just under 40 hours across all 27 county communities, Lake St. Clair Metropark, Stony Creek Metropark, Selfridge Air National Guard Base and Macomb Community College. And despite some rainy weather near the end of the relay, I can attest that it was a huge accomplishment. I was there, alongside our great support team, for nearly every mile of the course. I saw our communities come together to welcome and cheer on the runners and the specially-designed torch. I also spoke with many of those runners and people on the route and heard wonderful stories of our region's past, present and future. Those experiences inspired me and made me proud to be a Macomb County resident. I think all of the event's participants and attendees felt the same.

This event was no small undertaking and I'd like to thank everyone who was involved in making it a great success – especially the talented and hard-working torch relay planning team:

- [Event Calendar](#)
- [New Hires/Retirees](#)
- [Blog Log](#)
- [News Nook](#)

Event Calendar



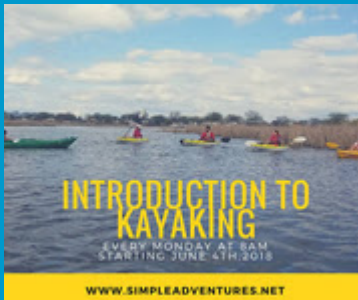
Red Cross Blood Drive

[Wednesday, August 29](#) at the Macomb County Administration Building



Summer Yoga Series

[Wednesday, August 1](#) at Lake St. Clair Metropark



Introduction to Kayaking

[Monday, July 30](#) and [Monday, August 6](#) at Lake St. Clair Metropark

- Office of the County Executive: Pam Lavers, Kim Elward and John Cwikla
- Macomb County Sheriff's Office: Mike Shorkey, Stephen Sears, Jason Bone and Alex Pirkovic
- IT: Mike Liskey and Tom Nahas
- MCPED: Lauri Cowhy, Rachael Lisecki, Amanda Minaudo, Matt Pierscinski and Kim Wolosiewicz
- Macomb Community College: Nicole McKee
- Macomb County Department of Roads: Bryan Santo, Vince Viviano and Jared Boyd
- Hansons Running Shop: Bob Busquaert

Simply put – the torch relay would not have been possible without their support and dedication.

If you'd like to view photos from the relay, click [here](#). And as always, for a full list of upcoming events right here in Macomb County, please check out our Make Macomb Your Home [calendar](#).

Employee Focus - Dr. Mareitta Alston



This issue of Macomb Matters will introduce you to Dr. Mareitta Alston, a therapist III with Macomb County Community Mental Health (MCCMH). Dr. Alston has been with MCCMH for more than 20 years, first as a contract deaf specialist and therapist II and then, in 2012, she became a full-time employee for the county as a clinical supervisor for First Resource Southeast.

"I take pride in being a supervisor of MCCMH First Resource Southeast," she said. "I enjoy working with a group of amazing individuals who look out for the well-being of our consumers. I am constantly looking for ways to think outside the box to provide the services our consumers need."

As background, Dr. Alston received two Bachelor of Arts degrees in psychology and sociology from Wayne State University. She then pursued her Master of Arts in clinical and humanistic psychology at the Center of Humanistic Studies. Following her passion for psychology and working with the deaf and hard of hearing, she furthered her studies by earning her doctorate in clinical psychology and deaf studies at the Union Institute. All told, the limited license psychologist has more than 31 years of experience in the mental health field and she shares her knowledge as an adjunct professor for Baker College.

Dr. Alston's hobbies include reading, vacationing, monthly date nights with her husband, singing and being a church interpreter. She is also active in her church (Hartford Memorial Baptist Church) and her sorority (Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.).



'Motherhood' art exhibition

Saturday, July 28 -- Wednesday, September 5 at the Anton Art Center



Romeo Peach Festival

Labor Day Weekend

Blog Log

[New exhibit on motherhood coming to the Anton Art Center](#)

[Local man creates innovative update to ubiquitous socket wrench](#)

[Celebrating the Fourth of July as the Founding Fathers intended](#)

[Companies interested in choosing Macomb at Select USA](#)

[Using a Kooty Key every day keeps the doctor away](#)

[FLW Tour takes the science of fishing into the classroom](#)

[Gone Fishin': Country's top anglers to compete at FLW Tour on Lake St. Clair](#)

[LIVE from Macomb County....it's the Bicentennial Torch Relay!](#)

For your benefit: Summer health and safety tips

By Macomb County Human Resources and Labor Relations

School is out and the temperatures are rising, so now is a great time to review a few summer and travel safety tips.

SUMMERTIME - Sun

- Always use sunscreen and reapply often - every 2 to 3 hours.
- Avoid sun exposure between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. - when the sun is strongest.
- Wear protective eyewear.
- If you do get sunburned, stay in the shade until healed and apply pure aloe vera. Contact your doctor immediately if the sunburn is severe or blisters develop.

SUMMERTIME - Heat

- Exposure to heat kills approximately 400 Americans each year.
- Stay hydrated.
- Wear loose-fitting, light colored clothing.
- Never leave children, adults or pets in a closed, parked vehicle.
- For heat exhaustion (moist skin) apply wet cloths to skin and rehydrate slowly. Call 911 if the victim vomits, refuses water or loses consciousness. For heat stroke (dry skin) call 911 and apply wet cloths to skin and ice to wrists, ankles, underarms and neck.

TRAVEL

- Notify your credit card carrier that you will be traveling (where and when), especially if travelling out of the country. With this simple step, you can avoid experiencing issues with security or a freeze on your account.
- Bring a copy of your passport and keep it in a separate, safe place. This will protect you in the event that something happens to the original.
- Stop mail and cancel deliveries to your home. You can also ask a trusted friend to collect mail daily.
- Have someone maintain your yard.
- Consider using automatic timers on lights and televisions.
- Carry minimal amounts of cash.
- Be aware of scam artists or pick pockets.
- Research areas you will be traveling and familiarize yourself with local laws and safety concerns.
- Only use transportation services with official markings.

More detailed information on summertime safety can be found at <http://kidshealth.org/parent/summerspotlight>. You can also find tips for travel safety at <http://travel.state.gov/> and www.AlliedBarton.com/Tips.

Volunteer opportunity: Sign up to walk in the Romeo Peach Festival Parade

It's hard to believe that we surpassed the 6 month mark of Macomb County's 200th year. Our committee members and generous sponsors have helped us put on

[Macomb County honors Juneteenth with event](#)

[Pick a bushel of berries in Macomb County](#)

[Macomb County: Equipped and ready for next generation mobility](#)

News Nook

07/17/18 - [MCPWO averts sinkhole on Jefferson](#)

07/10/18 - [County Executive Mark A. Hackel appoints new director of human resources/labor relations](#)

07/09/18 - [Macomb County Community Mental Health receives \\$1.3 million to fight opioids](#)

06/26/18 - [Community Mental Health receives \\$440,000 grant](#)

06/25/18 - [Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel leads 200-mile Bicentennial Torch Relay](#)

06/06/18 - [Executive Mark A. Hackel touts progress of Macomb County land and water resource programs at annual State of Lake St. Clair address](#)

[For links to other recent press releases click here](#)

some incredible events and opportunities during this timeframe. And our next one will be at the Romeo Peach Festival. On [Monday, September 3](#), the county will sponsor a bicentennial float during the parade and we would like to extend an invitation for you to participate.

If you'd like to volunteer to walk in this event, please register at the link below by [Thursday August 9](#). If you would like to bring a family member or friend, please fill out a separate form for each participant. The parade route will begin on Van Dyke at 33 Mile Road and continue to Durham (Croswell Elementary). You will need to arrive by [noon](#) to avoid street closures and may be asked to ride the float, walk alongside it, carry a banner and/or pass out candy.

All parade walkers will receive a t-shirt to wear during the parade. Please make sure to indicate your shirt size when you register.

To sign up to volunteer click [here](#).

Thank you. We look forward to seeing you at the parade!

County-wide public art map launching at the end of summer

Cities and townships throughout Macomb County are making big investments in public art. So much so you could say our region is experiencing a bit of a renaissance.

For instance, in Mount Clemens, the Anton Art Center has a map of all of the city's paintings, sculptures and statues. Then there's Sterling Heights, which also has an arts map and recently adopted a budget that includes funding for adding more public pieces to its already great collection. Other cities focused on art include Eastpointe, which created a new Arts and Cultural Commission in their community. And of course, Macomb Township has a program that brings new public art to the township on a regular basis.

"The list goes on and on," said Deputy County Executive Pam Lavers. "There has been a real movement in Macomb County to highlight art."

An area of focus for Lavers is elevating county culture and art through the OneMacomb initiative. So she worked with the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development to create an arts and cultural asset map for the entire region. The goal of the tool is to increase awareness of resources, support tourism and elevate the economic development and revitalization efforts of all 27 county communities. Slated to launch at the end of summer, the interactive map will feature images, information and locations of all pieces of public art in the area. But to ensure all art is included, the county will be seeking the public's help in finding, photographing and submitting pieces. Upon launch, there will be an online form available for individuals interested in doing this work. More information on the process will be available in several weeks, but county officials are hoping people will start tracking art now. Because according to Lavers: "The arts help define our community's identity, bring personal enjoyment, build a more inclusive community and bring people together."

For more information on this and other cultural projects, visit [OneMacomb's](#) website.

Employee Accolades - Macomb County Sheriff's Deputy Gregory Simmons receives award



We are proud to recognize and congratulate Deputy Gregory Simmons of the Macomb County Sheriff's Office for his 2017 Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Lifesavers Outstanding Deputy Award. Deputy Simmons had a total of 92 Operating Under the Influence of Liquor (OUIL) arrests, which included 11 third offenses, 10 Operating Under the Influence of Drugs (OUID) arrests and three Felonious Assault with a Motor

Vehicle arrests.

The MADD Lifesavers Award highlights officers and law enforcement agencies that embrace the mission of eliminating drunk driving, supporting victims and preventing underage drinking. It is presented annually in June.

Keep up the great work on making Macomb County roads safe!

Macomb County moves forward with Mound Road transformation effort



A major infrastructure initiative is planned for Macomb County – one that would fix perhaps the most important stretch of road in Southeast Michigan. This project, a public-private collaborative effort known

as Innovate Mound, will include building a better Mound Road Corridor that features smart technology to enhance the efficient and safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians. Business leaders and representatives from Macomb County, Sterling Heights and Warren came together to create the partnership in an effort to improve the major artery from its current poor state into a next-generation corridor of innovation. This transformation is essential for ensuring the health of our region's economy, as Mound is home to more than 81,000 jobs in the manufacturing, automotive, aerospace and defense sectors and is responsible for billions of dollars of output.

In June, the Innovate Mound initiative received a major boost from the federal government when the U.S. Department of Transportation selected it as a recommended Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant project to be funded by Congress. The \$97.8 million grant will help fund the \$184.6 million total cost of reconstruction.

If Congress approves the project, the reconstruction of Mound would start in about 20 months. The work along the corridor would be along 9 miles from I-696 to Hall Road and would include more than just repaving the crumbling roadway. All told, the project will tackle everything from better traffic flow and landscaping to unified lighting and a nonmotorized, multi-use path. It will also feature the installation of

pedestrian bridges, improved transit stops, technology for traffic signals and a connected vehicles pilot project with real-time speed monitoring. The end result: a smart roadway.

But what does that mean and why do we need it? Well, with car connectivity on the rise (by 2020, more than [75 percent](#) of vehicles shipped will be connected), this system is increasingly relevant.

In a recent [interview](#), John Abraham, director of traffic and operations at the Macomb County Department of Roads, described why this is important: “In one scenario, if a connected car gets into a crash, an alert comes to the center (COMTEC) immediately and sends information that the airbag was deployed, and the extent of the damage. The emergency dispatch center gets the information also, and we can deploy the right resources to the crash using the GPS location of the accident,” he said.

Ultimately, Macomb County would like to increase safety on area roads and decrease the number of car accidents. That’s why leaders are working towards smart and connected roadways like the future Mound Road Corridor. And notably, we’re already leading the country in this type of infrastructure.

For instance, an integral part of connectivity and vehicle communications are roadside units (RSU), boxes that gather and broadcast information at an intersection. These boxes signal back to COMTEC so traffic signals can be prioritized for emergency vehicles or during periods of heavy road usage. They can also link with connected vehicles and alert them to changing lights or other hazards. Currently, Macomb County has five RSUs completely operational, and the plan is to install 20 to 25 additional units this summer. Federal grants will then provide the funding to have 301 RSUs installed by early 2019, with a goal of having all 740 traffic signals in the county connected in three years. Only a few dozen locations across the U.S. have installed connected technology like this and Macomb is among the handful that also have an operational RSU. That’s certainly impressive; but of course it makes sense that the Motor City region would be a trailblazer in this effort. We make the cars, therefore we lead the way in next generation mobility.

Retiree Spotlight

Polly Helzer retires after 54 years with the county

On July 6, 1964, Polly Helzer walked into the old Macomb County building to start her first day of work as a typist clerk. On July 6, 2018, she closed the door to her office in the purchasing department for the last time, marking her official retirement.

For 54 years Polly dedicated her time and talent to the county through a variety of roles. She worked as a typist and secretary and then, after attending night school, she rose to roles in accounting and purchasing. Eventually, she became a manager in the purchasing department – the first female county employee to hold that title. In addition to this work, Polly served on the pension board and ran a union within the county. She also helped architects design interiors for the county offices and created beautiful décor for the lobby on various holidays.

Notably, Polly did all of this while being a single parent – a testament to her strength and determination. She also had some good friends alongside her

throughout, including her best friend, Lynn Arnott-Bryks, director of facilities and operations. These friends, and the countless other individuals she encountered over the years at the county, are what she will miss the most in retirement. But Polly has a plan for the future. Eight years ago she opened Pollyanna's, an antiques store that offers vintage and specialty items. Without her nine-to-five job, she can focus exclusively on the Mount Clemens shop. And that makes Polly happy. She's also thrilled to spend more time in her award-winning garden and with her pets – Ms. Ruby, Mr. Kitty and Lucas. So while it was hard to leave the place she's worked for 54 years, Polly's business and hobbies make the transition better and she is looking forward to this next chapter.

Rachael Lisecki retires from the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development



On Friday, July 13, county employees gathered at Lake St. Clair Metropark to congratulate Rachael Lisecki on her retirement from MCPED. Rachael worked for the department for more than 22 years. Her talents and friendship will certainly be missed.

If someone in your department is retiring and you'd like to highlight their service in Macomb Matters, please send an email with images and information to human.resources@macombgov.org.

Perks at Work: End of summer fun at the Detroit Zoo



Are you lacking Vitamin Z? If you answered yes, you might want to consider spending the day at the zoo! And luckily, Macomb County and the Detroit Zoo have partnered to provide discounted tickets to employees and their family members. So before summer slips away, head to the zoo to

enjoy the animal attractions and special exhibits.

For instance, Dinosauria is back! Forty lifelike animatronic dinosaurs that snarl and move – and some that spit – will provide a megadose of Vitamin Z. Don't miss out—Dinosauria is the largest dinosaur exhibit of its kind in the country. Valid dates are through Labor Day.

Another zoo attraction is the Wild Adventure Zone 4-D theater and simulator ride. At the theater, you can choose from two shows—Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure 4-D or SpongeBob SquarePants 4-D: The Great Jelly Rescue. You can also take a ride on the simulator and experience Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs – The Ride. This adventure begins with the sub-zero heroes venturing into a mysterious underground world after Sid the sloth stumbles across three abandoned eggs and decides to raise them as his own. Once the eggs hatch, chaos ensues in the lost world of dinosaurs.

To get your tickets, visit the Macomb County Government Perks at Work site at www.perksatwork.com. Click on the exclusive tab, and then click on the Detroit Zoo icon for further information. Once there, you can purchase discounted general admission tickets, tickets to ride the Tauber Family Railroad, tickets to the Wild Adventure Zone attractions and Dining in the Zoo meal vouchers.

Healing through art at the Juvenile Justice Center



If you Google “art therapy” you’ll find endless information touting the benefits of this craft. It can be fun, relaxing and an opportunity for someone to express themselves creatively. Art can also help people overcome trauma and manage negative emotions.

In a recent collaboration with the Anton Art Center, 15 residents of the Juvenile Justice Center Bridges Academy painted a larger than life mural in the center’s cafeteria. Planning for the mural started nine months ago when the Juvenile Justice Center received a grant to provide art therapy to its residents, who range in age from 13 to 15.

After the planning process concluded, residents worked with an art therapist in brainstorming sessions to develop the theme of the mural - “RESPECT.” Next, each resident drew small renderings which were then combined and projected onto the wall of the cafeteria.

Karianne Spens-Hanna, an art therapist who helped the residents on the project, stated: “Giving the residents the opportunity to express their feelings through art, such as painting the mural, helps to increase self-esteem and communication skills as we conceptualized the project together as a group. Creating work on such a large scale also instills a sense of accomplishment and empowerment.”

After the renderings were combined and the vision for the mural finalized, the Anton Art Center secured local artist, Elise Martin, who specializes in working with children. Paint for the mural was donated by Shelby Paint and Decorating.

Rhonda Westphal, the director of the Juvenile Justice Center, concluded: “The arts provide an opportunity for our residents to learn new skills, develop new talents and express thoughts in a creative and productive way.”

The mission of the Macomb County Juvenile Justice Center is to provide a safe, secure, structured environment for youth involved in the juvenile justice system while ensuring the safety and security of the community. Through the combined efforts of the staff, families and the community, we provide educational, therapeutic and social skills promoting positive citizenship in youth.



NACo Achievement Awards – Update!

In our last issue, we congratulated IT and Planning & Economic Development for programs recognized by the [NACo Achievement Awards](#) program.

Turns out, we missed one! Congratulations to the Health Department for the “Pharmacy Outreach Medication Collection Program.”

Macomb County rests on 31 miles of Lake St. Clair shoreline. Known as the “heart” of the Great Lakes, this precious natural resource is a vital link between lakes Huron and Erie and provides drinking water and recreational opportunities for people in Michigan and Canada. More than four million residents rely on the system for safe, clean drinking water.

The lake also contributes to our overall economic health. Many businesses and jobs are connected to fishing, boating and other activities on or near the lake. Because of this, Macomb County is continuously committed to finding innovative ways to protect water quality.

One way we are doing this is through the prevention of unwanted and unused medications entering the water system. In collaboration with local communities, independent pharmacies, OPERATION Rx and others, Macomb County residents can now safely dispose of pharmaceuticals at established drop-off locations in 16 of Macomb’s 27 cities and townships. For more information about the program visit: <http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-EnvironmentalHealth-RiskAssessment-MedicationDisposal>

Congratulations once again to the Health Department for this achievement.

Paw Print: A day in the life of a Macomb County animal control officer



A note from Chief Randazzo, Macomb County Animal Control Division

A day in the life of a Macomb County animal control officer (ACO) is not your typical day

at the office. For instance, ACO Brandon Davis recently answered a call from a concerned Saint Clair Shores resident about ducklings trapped in a storm sewer. Using a net and a lot of patience, Deputy Davis carefully scooped up the 11 ducklings as a nervous mother duck watched nearby. The ducklings likely wouldn't have made it out of the sewer on their own. "I was determined to rescue them all," said Davis. "I am so thankful for the caring residents that assisted with the rescue."

Ducklings in a sewer is a common call that comes into animal control this time of year. Chief Animal Control Officer Jeff Randazzo applauded the efforts of Deputy Davis and stated that all animal control officers are trained on this delicate type of rescue.

To learn more about the typical, and not so typical, rescues provided by animal control officers, you can join a virtual ride-along on YouTube. Macomb County Animal Control on Patrol is a YouTube series, hosted by ShelbyTV, featuring video footage of animal rescues. One [recent episode](#) highlights an officer rescuing ducklings in a storm sewer and then reuniting them with their momma duck. There's even a video showing officers capturing and [relocating snakes](#).

If you are inspired by a day in the life of a Macomb County animal control officer, there are several ways you can help the department. Macomb County Animal Control accepts [gifts and donations](#). They also maintain an Amazon [Wishlist](#) for needed items that can be shipped right to the department. Finally, from now until [August 1, 2018](#), you can support Macomb County Animal Control in [Bissell's Support the Shelters Sweepstakes!](#) Visit the sweepstakes site to vote for Macomb County Animal Control and you'll be entered to win a Bissell product as well.

Recipe Corner - Strawberry Yogurt Popsicles

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons of honey
- 2 cups of plain or vanilla yogurt



Materials:

- Popsicle molds
- Bowl
- Rubber spatula
- Measuring spoons
- Sharp knife

Directions:

1. Pour the mixture into a bowl and stir in the lemon juice and honey.
2. Add yogurt and mix everything together.
3. Pour mixture into 6 popsicle molds and add sticks.
4. Freeze overnight.
5. Run warm water over each popsicle mold to help remove the dessert.
6. Enjoy!

Chef Notes:



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(586) 469-7001

- If you don't have a blender, mash the fruit with a fork.
- Use fresh or frozen fruit.
- If popsicle molds are unavailable, use paper cups and a popsicle stick.

